TO THE VICTORS GO THE SPOILS

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS’ MISSION TO EUROPE, 1943-1947

By

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ABSTRACT

From 1943 to 1947, the Library of Congress, under the Monuments Fine Arts and Archives, maintained a program known as the European Mission. The Mission initially began as a means to acquire items in occupied territory. At the direct conclusion of the war, the Mission confiscated items from publisher stocks which had been ordered and paid for but unshipped due to the war. In 1945, however, the Mission's policies took on a more odious nature, including the active participation in censorship, confiscations of private libraries, and the destruction of "unwanted" German literature. These policies were immediately criticized by the American press and the American Library Association, but to no avail. What readers and librarians should find disturbing is the comparison of the European Mission to Nazi Germany's Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg. The moral of this article is what happens when librarians become entangled in a government's policy to confiscate, censor and destroy a literary past. Unless otherwise noted, all information is taken from the European Mission Archives at the Library of Congress.
The victorious troops occupied a country of passive civilians and defeated soldiers. Soon the victors set about to transform the conquered society. All publications including literature deemed by the conquerors politically offensive were banned, collected, and destroyed. The national library association protested the destruction at the highest levels, but to no avail. All private libraries of interest and value were listed for possible confiscation for shipment back to the conquering country. All records of the patent office were confiscated and patents annulled. All union archives were confiscated. Sound extreme? On 13 May, 1945, the U.S. Army drafted just such orders and signed Allied Control Authority Order No. 4, Confiscation of Literature and Materials of a Nazi and Militarist Nature. How the U.S. Government, military, Library of Congress, and hundreds of universities condoned and participated in this action is a story untold for decades, buried in the Library of Congress Archives. This program was the Library of Congress Mission to Europe (also variously known as the LC Mission and European Mission).

When Reichsmarschall Hermann Goring was handed papers to fill out, he returned them with a remark written on the margins: to the victors go the spoils. Neither Goring, an insatiable art and book collector, nor his interrogators had any idea of what was transpiring across Germany in regards to German libraries and publishing firms. Nazi Germany had received thousands of dollars for book orders which had gone unfilled when war was declared. The Mission initially set up shop in Germany in order to confiscate stocks of books from publishers as a means to fill the back orders. A simple enough task, but the program soon deviated from this task early on.
and began spinning out of control.

The LC Mission actually had its genesis in 1943 as a means to purchase materials unavailable due to the war and trade embargoes. The Library arranged for Manual Sanchez, a Library employee and former student of the Librarian of Congress, to act as their agent in countries that were occupied by the Germans or their fascist allies. Under the guidance of a U.S. Navy intelligence officer, Mr. Sanchez was also given lists of books and publications found of technical interest for him to purchase. This was in addition to the thousands of “legitimate” titles Sanchez picked up at book fairs at the request of the Exchange Division of the Library of Congress. One letter, dated November 6, 1943, instructs Mr. Sanchez to procure the titles Neue allgemeine Theorie der mehrlufigen axialen Turbomaschine and “Atti di Guidonia,” which were technical reports regarding jet propulsion and aeronautics. Sanchez found fascist Spain one of his best sources for materials.

The German book Sanchez was asked to find is an interesting story by itself. The title translates as New general theory of multistage axial flow turbo machines, the English title being translated and published after the war by the Navy Department. The German title Sanchez acquired in 1943 was not “officially” transferred to the Library’s collections until November 1944 and cataloged the following year. It is also given the misleading subject heading of “steam turbines” when in fact the book concerns steam and gas turbines, the latter for jet aircraft propulsion. Contrary to popular belief, German scientists were just as eager as others to publish their highly scientific findings.

It was highly dangerous work for Mr. Sanchez, acting essentially as a spy, collecting material the transfer of which could be deemed illegal in wartime. At best Mr. Sanchez would have been
expelled from the country, such as was done recently to KGB agents found photocopying technical reports in U.S. libraries. At worst, Sanchez would have been shot as a spy; it appears Sanchez was never given military rank as other members of the Monuments Fine Arts and Archives (MFAA) and worked under diplomatic cover, the usual domain for a spy. The strain showed in his letters, sent out in diplomatic pouches. Apparently forbidden to write directly to his family in the U.S., he expressed concern and greetings to be passed along by the Mission, at the time a function of the Exchange Division at the Library of Congress.

It is easy to follow the remarkable exploits of this extraordinary man through the LC Mission Archives. This unsung patriot faced not only danger but many hardships in his far reaching travels on behalf of the LC Mission. Along with the Allied Army, Sanchez was sent to North Africa and then on to Italy. The letters suggest that things always did not go smoothly for Sanchez. He complains a number of times about his contacts not being informed of his arrival and mission, an obviously unnerving experience under the circumstances.

To return to Germany in 1945, the U.S. Army, after the German surrender, shifted tasks from conquering to occupying and began to set forth the policy of “de-nazification.” An innocent program reminiscent of the American Civil War’s “Southern Reconstruction,” it was scoffed at and ridiculed by Germans (see, for instance, Christian Zentner’s Der Zweite Weltkrieg). Indeed, a famous poster from the 1970’s shows an identity book of Adolf Hitler with “De-Nazified” stamped across his photo. The vast majority of Germans simply went along with the program, not really needing much of a reminder other than their bombed out cities to realize how bad an idea Nazism was.

Order No. 4 was soon to show how much more thorough de-nazification would be than
simple oath-taking, the central role to be taken by the Library of Congress’ European Mission.

All books and publications of a Nazi and “militaristic” nature were to be turned in to collection points for destruction. Paragraph 2 of Order No. 4 stated:

All former state and municipal libraries, directors of universities and heads or directors of other higher educational establishments and secondary schools or all institutions for scientific research presidents, presidents of academies, all scientific and technical societies and associations, and also directors of elementary and partial secondary schools and gymnasia, to remove literature enumerated in paragraph 1, and having collected it in complete order in specially allocated places, together with the relevant cards from the card index system of the library, to hand them over to the representatives of the Military Kommandatura or other Allied Authorities.

In case anybody had any doubts as to which publications were being referred to, constantly expanding lists were made available. The American press immediately reported and denounced the action as a mass purge of German publications, the most obvious parallel the Nazi practice of public book-burnings of “unerwünschte” (unwanted) literature. The first to complain about this wholesale destruction was the American Library Association. In a singular act of courage, the President of the ALA, Ralph J. Ulveling, and ALA Executive Secretary Carl H. Milan, sent a telegram on May 14, 1946 to President Truman, Secretary of War Robert Patterson, Secretary of State James Byrnes, as well as nine assorted Senate and House members decrying this action and how it would publically appear. The telegram stated in its entirety:

As officers of the American Library Association we protest with all possible emphasis the reported decision of the Allied Authorities in Germany to confiscate and destroy Nazi publications. With full endorsement of the obvious motive to stamp out Nazism we are confident that the method will be condemned in America and all over the world as short sighted, unsound and contrary to democratic principles. If the report is true we urge that the order be revoked.

General Lucius D. Clay, the Deputy Military Governor for Germany and senior military officer in charge of this policy, was angered by Ulveling’s telegram. Reuben Peiss, Chief of the
LC Mission, contacted General Eyster, Chief of Public Relations Division, in order to combat not only the telegram they deemed "unjustified and harmful," but also the "false impression being created by the American press." According to Peiss in his 1 November 1946 memo, it is General Clay who "asked our help and advice in execution of the program" on 13 June, 1946.

An official response to the ALA telegram was sent to the Librarian of Congress:

General Clay in interview yesterday assured us no books will be burned, Order concerned only with militaristic and Nazi literature by reasonable definition, of which record copies will be preserved within US Zone and additional copies made available to all occupying nations. Surplus undesirable books will be pulped to provide badly needed paper stock.

The general's anger can certainly be seen as understandable under the circumstances. The fear was very real that Nazi Germany or German militarism would again become resurgent. To this end, the U.S. military government sought to end the militaristic tendencies of Germans by not only ending the well-known Heidelberg University dueling fraternities, but the glorification of war in German literature. Under the Nazis, the literary genre known as "Fronterlebniss-literature," in which it was asserted true life could only be experienced through combat, was about all that was published. The U.S. military authorities would see to it that such books would be destroyed, with only a few hundred copies spared for research—of which only three copies would remain in Germany.

The U.S. military, with the willing assistance of the Mission, was already engaged in wholesale confiscation before Order No. 4 became publicly known. The first category for confiscation naturally targeted obvious Nazi institutions such as the Adolf Hitler Schule. Next on the list would be the private collections of Nazi leaders, some of whom were either dead or soon to be. Many private collections, particularly that of Adolf Hitler's, had been shipped
during the war to salt mines in Salzburg as protection against bombing raids. The collections stayed there after Allied discovery until they were sorted and shipped to the Library of Congress.

Interestingly, such confiscations also brought large public and private collections into the U.S. which had previously been illegally confiscated by the Nazis for one reason or another. The Nazi organization charged with book confiscation during the war was the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (Rosenberg Task Force, or ERR). The ERR had targeted libraries and collections of 10,000 items and above for “purchase” and confiscation. Once confiscated, the ERR often sold collections, Hermann Goring “buying” a number of libraries to go along with his art collections. Some collections were kept intact and stored for later “study.” For example, the Nazis had intended to found special schools and research institutions to study specific subjects such as Freemasonry and Judaism. This is how the Library of Congress oddly came into possession of 20,000 Freemasonry items. What subsequently happened to this collection I have been unable to determine at this time.

The largest single collection of items confiscated by the ERR is normally referred to as the Offenbach Depot Collection, named after the location where it had been stored by the Nazis. This collection consisted of 2,300,000 volumes confiscated from Jewish synagogues, communities, and individuals. The collections were at first sorted by book plate (or similar identification) for repatriation. Since the Nazis had not only destroyed virtually all of the Jewish communities, the U.S. repatriated the collections back to either their country of origin or the new State of Israel. It appears the Library of Congress kept only about 20,000 items for their own collection.

U.S. authorities did not simply stop at the Adolf Hitler Schule, but also confiscated the
records of the German patent office. On the one hand, a reasonable person can understand this policy decision. German scientists had invented—and obviously patented to a certain degree—some of the world’s most advanced weaponry. The most obvious examples are the high-altitude jet aircraft and ballistic missiles. Such obvious examples, however, were already in Allied hands and available for reverse engineering. Experimental weaponry which had never made it off the drawing boards was another matter. U.S. and Russian intelligence officers were not only interested in securing such German scientists if possible, but any of their papers and patents as well. Letters and memoranda in the Mission Archives point to the fact that the Patent Office papers came and remained under U.S. military control and evaluation until their release.

Had the confiscations of books, libraries, and archives remained at this level, which is to say unfilled prewar back orders, Nazi Party war criminals and institutions, along with repatriating items stolen by the ERR, there would be no ethical questions to ask. Things began to go terribly wrong when U.S. officials deviated from this plan for some as yet undetermined reason. As told in Lynn Nicholas’s *The Rape of Europa*, the men of the Monuments and Fine Arts unit fought hard—to the point of insubordination and threats of court-martial—to see that art belonging to Germany stayed in Germany. When a number of masterpieces were ordered shipped to the U.S., the men of the MFAA signed a petition not only condemning the action, but pointing out how the reasons for transfer were very similar to Nazi reasoning for confiscation. What the author failed to point out, however, was that this ethical attitude did not extend to Nazi or combat art, all of which was confiscated and transported to America. The Mission, unfortunately, went far beyond the actions of the MFAA in simply confiscating what constituted “Nazi” literature.

With the help of Library of Congress personnel, small private German libraries as low as
2,000 items were identified. David H. Clift, on 11 February, 1946—a full three months before the ALA became aware of Order No. 4 and book destruction—sent the following memorandum to LC Mission Field Detachment:

Herewith is a list of book collections of certain German scholars. We suggest that you inquire whether any of these persons have been arrested and if so whether their collections can be examined with a view to confiscation. In any event, it will probably be helpful for you to talk with them.

These libraries were not only identified, but included an explanation of why they were wanted. One such library belonged to Dr. Johannes Ziekkursch, professor of medieval and modern history at the University of Cologne. Dr. Eugen Schmalenbach’s collection was annotated “former professor of accounting, leading authority, large collection.” The list includes dozens of such “targets” of economics, accounting, and law professors. One can certainly infer from such memoranda that some U.S. officials were obviously interested in identifying valuable collections first, as opposed to finding and identifying Nazi war criminals for prosecution.

Just how this policy could be abused and perverted for personal gain is evidenced from the case of Hans Reich, a book dealer from Berlin. Lieutenant Loeb, a European immigrant who still owned a bookstore in New York while attached to the LC Mission, clearly wanted Herr Reich’s book stock. In September 1945 Loeb went to personally view Reich’s collection, a portion of which was highly prized. Loeb then sent an anonymous notice to Headquarters, Counter Intelligence Corps, U.S. Forces European Theater (Berlin) and British Field Security Service stating that Reich was an SS man currently in hiding. Reuben Peiss and Charles Lehmann, Agent-in-Charge for Counter Intelligence, went to Reich and confiscated one box of material, described only as “badly needed Springer imprints.” Loeb subsequently showed up
with three Army trucks and took the entire collection.

In May 1946, Reich naively wrote to Loeb asking him for the compensation he had been promised from the Library of Congress for his collection. Peiss then wrote on 18 June, 1946, to Jacob Zuckerman asking him to investigate the matter. He was already wise to what was going on, surmising that Loeb had sent the telegram, calling the incident "one of Loeb's brainstorms" and "thoroughly shoddy business." Peiss ended his memo by stating "I am perfectly willing to say that this whole deal was badly done and that the fault is ours."

This issue was still unresolved—and unpaid—by 1953. F.S. Hannaman, Chief, Legal Affairs Division, Office of the United States High Commissioner for Germany, sent a letter on February 24, 1953, to the Library of Congress. Before paying Reich $7,500 for stock stolen by Loeb, a princely sum and enough to buy a home in those days, Hannaman wanted to know whether or not the books had ever reached the Library of Congress. The response, dated June 1, 1953, stated "We can, I believe, fairly conclusively state that the Library of Congress did not receive the books allegedly removed from Reich's shop by Lt. Loeb." Unmentioned was the fact that the Library of Congress had purchased books from Loeb's bookstore after the war. Vernor Clapp, Chief Assistant Librarian, sent along a disingenuously exculpatory attachment noting that Loeb was not officially a Library employee until five weeks after the incident, and that he was also now dead.

The misadventures of Lt. Loeb did not end with illegally taking collections from individuals like Reich. An audacious individual, Loeb next set his sights on brazenly shaking down an entire country. As an agent for the Library of Congress, Loeb had purchased material from a variety of book dealers and universities in Austria on credit. He appears to have duly paid his
accounts at the time he was employed by the Library. In 1946, Loeb went back to Austria, asking for credit for large purchases. He notified the dealers that he had left the Army and Library, but would like to continue the relationship anyway. Based on his past affiliations, as explained in a February 1949 memo sent directly to the Librarian of Congress by publishers R. Lechner and Dr. W. Steiner, he was trusted in Austria. Loeb simply vanished with the merchandise.

The two Austrians were hoping the Library of Congress would find a quiet solution so as to avoid harm to the institution due to a planned published warning by the Austrian National Bank regarding Loeb, implicating the Library of Congress by extension. Unfortunately for Austria, Dan Lacy, Assistant Director for Acquisitions, responded legalistically to the two Austrians. He informed them in a letter dated April 14, 1949, that it was a personal matter and the Library had no jurisdiction over Loeb. The Austrians were assured that their letter would be forwarded to Loeb, the Library effectively washing its hands of the matter.

The shenanigans of entrepreneur manque Lt. Loeb were a mere sideshow to the level of material being legally confiscated from Germany. A review of the Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1947, the year the Mission closed down, shows just how massive that operation was. Including those items purchased by Sanchez, the Library purchased, from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Switzerland 718,769 items for a total of $175,258.89. Furthermore, the Mission shipped from the Russian Zone 86,000 pieces, valued at $170,429.42, items held from pre-war orders. This pales in comparison to the items confiscated from Germany. In 7,578 shipments, the Library of Congress received 1,250,000 items in roughly one year alone. This is quite a haul when one
realizes that the Library of Congress contained less than five million books prior to the Second World War. Unknown is the exact number of items pulped by the Mission, numbers which surely are counted in millions. The numbers combined are equal in scope to the actions of the ERR, one simple fact any librarian should find disturbing.

This short article on the history of the Library of Congress’ European Mission can hardly do justice to a topic worth a book. There are many lessons, however, to be learned from even this short review. American librarians should be very aware of the active role they played in the acquisition, confiscation, and destruction of German library holdings—public and private. Alfred Rosenberg, the founder of the ERR, was initially tasked with waging war against the “ideological enemies of Nazism.” What right did the ERR have to destroy a literary past, and was the European Mission similarly engaged in an ideological war? And is it even fair to compare the ERR to the European Mission?

Most readers are probably unaware that the Founding Fathers considered this very question of the “negative” or “destructive” influences of literature. The question was, surprisingly, concerning classical literature. The Founding Fathers looked to antiquity for their models of ideals in establishing (actually re-establishing) a democratic form of government. Not all liked what they saw in the past and even thought the lessons of the past were counterproductive. Homer’s Iliad was particularly singled out for glorifying a particularly savage form of militarism and warfare, values considered anathema to an emerging democracy. Joel Barlow’s The Columbiad (1807) decried Homer as a man whose “existence has really proved one of the signal misfortunes of mankind.”

With this in mind, how can librarians, let alone a government, justify the destruction and
confiscation of whole collections, private and public, on ideological grounds? Some of the Founding Fathers and colonial Americans may have vociferously opposed classical literature, but they certainly neither burned nor pulped published material they deemed offensive. Cooler heads prevailed and academic freedom with access to all publications is a Constitutional right—a right not extended by Americans to a defeated Germany. Librarians everywhere should review the lessons of World War II and their roles in the ERR and European Mission as a cautionary tale. Librarians should be the first to ensure such wholesale destruction of a literary and religious past, first by the German occupiers, then by American victors, never happens again.
The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II: A Chronology (May 7, 1995 to July 7, 1999) and Resource Guide

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ABSTRACT

This report presents a chronology of recent investigations (May 7, 1995, to July 7, 1999) into the identification and recovery of assets (dormant bank accounts, works of art, looted gold, unpaid insurance claims, etc.) that were lost or stolen during World War II and the Holocaust. This report features a broad overview of the recent activities by private individuals, organizations, and governments such as Germany, Switzerland, the United States, and other nations, as well as providing a comprehensive bibliography of print and electronic sources. A list of private and governmental organizations that are assisting with the claims of victims of the Holocaust and their heirs is also included. This report will be updated as events warrant.
The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II: A Chronology (May 7, 1995 to July 7, 1999) and Resource Guide

Summary

This report is a compilation of recent investigations (May 7, 1995 - July 7, 1999) into the role of Swiss banks and other institutions dealing with the recovery of hidden or stolen assets of victims of the Holocaust from World War II (1939-1945). Included is an overview of the worldwide inquiry by Switzerland, the United States Congress, and the governments of other nations in the following areas: dormant bank accounts, looted art, and cultural objects; Nazi gold transfers; policy claims against European insurance companies by Holocaust survivors and their heirs; and recent lawsuits by former slave laborers in Nazi-run factories in Germany and other Nazi-occupied territories. A selected list of printed and electronic resources is included along with the addresses and telephone numbers of organizations currently assisting victims of the Holocaust and their heirs from the World War II era with claims and reparations.

Related reports on this topic include the following: CRS Report 98-903, Holocaust-Related Legislation of the 105th Congress; CRS Report 98-699, Holocaust Survivor and Heir Lawsuits to Recover Swiss Bank Deposits; and CRS Report 98-329, Nazi War Crimes Records Disclosure: Public Law No. 105-246.
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The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II: A Chronology (May 7, 1995 to July 7, 1999) and Resource Guide

This chronology begins on May 7, 1995, with the official apology by then Swiss President Kaspar Villinger for his country’s role in denying asylum to countless Jewish refugees during World War II, and continues through to the activity of the ensuing Congresses including the first hearings held by the U.S. Senate Banking Committee during the 104th Congress, second session (1996) on Swiss banks and Holocaust victims; legislation introduced and passed during the 105th Congress (1997-1998); and legislation recently introduced in the 106th Congress (1999-2000). The information presented is compiled from press reports and news articles from commercial databases such as NEXIS/LEXIS, WESTLAW, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), and “news tracker” via the Excite search engine on the Internet. This report also provides comprehensive lists of print and electronic resources, as well as useful addresses and telephone numbers of organizations assisting with Holocaust-era claims and reparations.

Chronology

1995

05/07/95 An official apology was issued by then President of Switzerland, Kaspar Villinger, for his country’s role in denying asylum to countless Jewish refugees during the war; he stated that Switzerland “bears a considerable burden of guilt for the treatment of the Jews.” His remarks were made in a speech to a special session of Parliament marking the 50th anniversary of V-E Day, the Allied victory in Europe.

09/01/95 The Swiss Banking Association (SBA) announced the discovery of $34 million in dormant bank accounts that may have belonged to Holocaust victims. The SBA also agreed to relax strict secrecy laws only for dormant accounts to help locate missing Jewish and non-Jewish assets from the war era.

1996

01/01/96 The SBA established a research center under the direction of Hanspeter Haeni, the bankers’ ombudsman, to act as an intermediary between persons seeking funds from orphaned or dormant accounts and the Swiss banking community.

02/07/96 The SBA announced that $32 million were found in 775 additional dormant accounts opened prior to 1945, including those of non-European origin.
The U.S. Senate Banking Committee headed by Senator Alfonse D’Amato held the first hearing on the status of assets deposited in Swiss banks by European Jews and other victims of the Holocaust. The methodology of the accounting records used by Swiss financial institutions came under sharp criticism as well as their treatment of Holocaust survivors/heirs, who had previously requested information on lost accounts but were rebuffed by Swiss bank officials. Printed as Senate Hearing 104-582.

The World Jewish Congress (WJC), the World Jewish Restitution Organization, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and the SBA signed an agreement that would relax Swiss banking secrecy laws to allow a joint independent commission to reexamine dormant Swiss accounts. An Independent Committee of Eminent Persons led by Paul Volcker, former chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve System, was chosen to audit an earlier study by the Swiss bankers’ ombudsman. The other six panel members are Professor Curt Gasteyger, a Swiss historian; Alain Hirsh, an expert on security and accounting; Klaus Jakobi, a former Swiss ambassador to the United States; Avraham Burg, chairman of the Jewish Agency in Israel; Rueben Beraja, chairman of the Latin American Jewish Congress; and Ronald Lauder, an American representing Jewish interests.

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office released its document, Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives, that alleged the Allies knew of the large amounts of Nazi gold exported to Switzerland, but were afraid of losing Swiss support in the postwar economic recovery plan. The report also alleged that the Swiss could be holding over $550 million worth of gold looted by Nazi Germany, valued today at $7 billion.

Besieged by international criticism, the Swiss Parliament agreed to a full investigation into assets stolen by the Nazis. An independent commission of historians and banking and legal experts was recommended to investigate Switzerland’s role as a financial center for looted assets.

Gizella Weisshaus, a Holocaust survivor living in Brooklyn, filed the first class action suit in a U.S. federal court in New York against various Swiss banks for allegedly refusing to return assets deposited before and during the war. The banks named in the suit included the Swiss Bank Corporation (also known as the Swiss National Bank), the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), and other banking institutions. Over 4,000 plaintiffs, Jews and non-Jews worldwide, were named in the lawsuit.

The U.S. Department of State announced that William Slany, chief historian of the Department of State, would lead investigations in the National Archives regarding Nazi gold in Swiss banks. The focus would be on the diplomatic efforts by the United States after the war and diplomatic contacts with the Swiss government.

A second class action complaint was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York on behalf of three classes of plaintiffs against the UBS for withholding assets deposited during the war years. The three classes of plaintiffs were defined as: 1) rightful owners of looted assets (those who had their assets looted
prior to or during internment in the concentration camps); 2) slave laborers and their heirs; and 3) certain Swiss bank depositors and their heirs (those who made deposits prior to and during the war years and have been unable to reclaim them).

10/24/96 In response to increasing world scrutiny, Flavio Cotti, the Swiss foreign minister, created a special task force whose mission is to coordinate Swiss diplomatic response to international criticism of Switzerland and its financial institutions. This special task force is directed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer.

10/30/96 President Clinton wrote a letter to World Jewish Congress (WJC) president Edgar Bronfman and asked him to expand the probe into Nazi assets, stating that his Administration "would make it a priority to classify and make available to the public all the relevant documents." President Clinton named Stuart Eizenstat, then Undersecretary of Commerce, to coordinate efforts by the U.S. government.

11/13/96 The Swiss bankers' ombudsman, Hanspeter Haeni, announced that only 11,000 Swiss francs ($8,750) from 1.6 million francs ($1.26 million) in unclaimed dormant accounts were linked directly to Holocaust victims. These initial findings were sharply criticized by the WJC as "unilateral and unacceptable."

11/19/96 Paul Volcker, head of the special auditing committee established in May 1996, announced that three American accounting firms (Arthur Andersen, KPMG Peat Marwick, and Price Waterhouse) were hired to investigate dormant Swiss accounts during the World War II era in response to criticism of the findings by the Swiss bankers' ombudsman.

11/26/96 The Argentine Central Bank in Buenos Aires released five volumes of documents to the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. These transactions contained information on funds including gold transferred from banks in Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal to Argentina between 1939 and 1949.

11/27/96 The upper house of the Swiss Parliament voted 37-0 to examine Switzerland's financial dealings with Nazi Germany and the fate of Jewish assets in Swiss accounts.

12/02/96 The WJC announced that it had uncovered documents from April 1945 in the National Archives pertaining to the ongoing inquiry. Letters from the United States embassy in Buenos Aires to acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew detailed the extent of Nazi investment in Argentina during the war. They were dubbed the "Morgenthau Letters" for including a letter from U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. dated February 1945. These documents reported that the Nazis had invested $500 million in commercial firms, $500 million in farms and ranches, $105 million in banks, and $40 million in insurance companies in Argentina between 1939 and 1944.

12/09/96 Both houses of the Swiss Parliament passed final legislation that waived the 3-month waiting period for laws to take force, thus allowing an independent panel to begin studying how much wealth was deposited into Swiss banks prior to and during World War II, and whether the Swiss had done enough to identify lost assets.
12/11/96 The U.S. House Banking Committee held a hearing on Swiss banks and Jewish assets during World War II. Among the witnesses before the committee were Special Ambassador Thomas Borer, chief of the Swiss Foreign Ministry Task Force on the Swiss bank question; Edgar Bronfinan, president of the WJC; Paul Volcker, chairman of the Committee of Eminent Persons; Senator D'Amato, chairman of the U.S. Senate Banking Committee; and various Holocaust survivors/heirs.

12/19/96 Peter Hug and Marc Perrenoud, two independent historians commissioned by the Swiss government, released their report on Swiss postwar deals with Nazi gold. Authorized in October 1996, this report investigated claims that assets from victims of the Holocaust were used by the Swiss to compensate its citizens whose property was seized by countries in Eastern Europe. The report rejected the charge that such funds were paid directly to Swiss citizens, but said instead they were used to pay Poland and Hungary under postwar compensation agreements.

12/20/96 Swiss historian Jean-Francois Bergier was chosen to head a nine-member Independent Commission of Experts (ICE) directed by the Swiss government to reexamine its wartime activities. The other members are Swiss historians Jacques Picard and Jakob Tanner; Joseph Voyame, a lawyer and former official in the Swiss justice ministry; Harold James from Princeton University; Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, a Jewish historian from Warsaw; Saul Friedlaender, an Israeli historian; and Sybil Milton, with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

12/24/96 During an interview in Switzerland, outgoing Swiss President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz rejected the creation of a $250 million compensation fund as “blackmail” and said that “such a fund would be considered an admission of guilt.” This fund was proposed earlier in the month to Special Ambassador Borer by representatives of the WJC and Senator D’Amato as a good-faith gesture to help elderly and destitute Jews pending the outcome of the investigations.

1997

01/05/97 Jewish leaders condemned Switzerland for not repudiating the remarks by Delamuraz. Israel Singer, secretary-general of the WJC, stated that the WJC and the Jewish Agency would support measures, including a boycott, unless Delamuraz’s remarks were “rejected by Switzerland and its bankers clearly and decisively.”

01/07/97 The Swiss cabinet offered to create a compensation fund with the $32 million found by the Swiss bankers’ ombudsman in November 1996. Their offer was firmly rejected by the WJC.

01/12/97 A memorandum dated January 12, 1946, to the head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the CIA, was found in the National Archives. It detailed how the Swiss National Bank sent truckloads of gold looted by the Nazis to Spain and Portugal in vehicles bearing the Swiss emblem.
01/21/97 Documents uncovered in the archives of the Riksbank, Sweden’s Central Bank, revealed that it may have received gold stolen by Nazi Germany. The Riksbank documents indicated that between 1939 and 1944, the bank bought 76,040 pounds of gold from Nazi Germany.

01/23/97 The Swiss government endorsed a plan for a memorial fund of $70 million to compensate victims/heirs who claimed dormant assets in Swiss banks.

01/25/97 French Minister Alan Juppé announced the creation of a task force to investigate the whereabouts of funds or property confiscated from Jewish owners by the Nazis or the Vichy regime during World War II.

01/27/97 Switzerland’s ambassador to the United States, Carlo Jagmetti, resigned following the disclosure of a confidential strategy paper he wrote in December 1996, urging Switzerland to “wage war” against international criticism that Swiss banks failed to account for missing assets of Holocaust victims and “not to trust most of the adversaries.”

01/29/97 Alfred de Fago, Switzerland’s general consul in New York, was named Switzerland’s ambassador to the United States.

02/02/97 The Dutch Foreign Ministry announced that a commission of historians and financial experts would investigate the whereabouts of 75 tons of gold reserves. According to Dutch and German records, these gold reserves were looted by the Nazis and may still be hidden in Swiss bank accounts or may have been transferred to another neutral nation during the war.

02/06/97 The three major Swiss banks—Crédit Suisse, Swiss Bank Corporation, and the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS)—announced the creation of a special Swiss humanitarian fund for Holocaust victims of 100 million Swiss francs (U.S. $70 million) to benefit victims of the Holocaust.

02/26/97 The Swiss government gave final approval to a Holocaust Memorial Fund (a.k.a. Swiss Humanitarian Fund) planned by the three major Swiss banks for Jewish and non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

02/28/97 Christoph Blocher, chairman of the Swiss chemical company EMS Chemie and a member of Parliament, stated that contributing to a fund for Holocaust survivors “was an admission of guilt” and that “Switzerland had no reason to apologize for doing business with Nazi Germany in order to survive as a neutral country.”

03/04/97 President Carlos Menem of Argentina offered Jewish groups full access to its Central Bank archives to investigate whether gold looted by the Nazis was transferred to Argentina via neutral European nations such as Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal. This offer was in response to a written request by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, which also sent letters to Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.
03/05/97 Swiss President Arnold Koller proposed, in a special address to Parliament, the creation of the Swiss Foundation for Solidarity, a humanitarian fund of 7 billion Swiss francs (U.S. $4.7 billion). The Foundation would donate up to SFr 300 million a year to needy recipients in Switzerland and abroad from profits from revaluing SFr 5 million in gold reserves from the Swiss Central Bank. According to President Koller, the beneficiaries would include “victims of poverty and catastrophes, of genocide, and other serious human rights abuses, and for victims of the Holocaust.”

03/06/97 The Swiss Central Bank offered to contribute SFr 70 million to the Holocaust Memorial Fund but it awaits approval from the Swiss Parliament. A federation of Swiss companies also pledged to contribute SFr 46 million to the special humanitarian fund.

03/07/97 Swiss historian Jean François Bergier, the chairman of the Independent Commission of Experts (ICE), announced that the ICE needed more time before issuing its first report to the Swiss government, which was expected by mid-1997.

03/11/97 Elan Steinberg, the executive director of the WJC, announced that the Swedish government had launched an investigation into its wartime dealings with Nazi Germany. The WJC stated that 900 dormant accounts believed to be those of Holocaust victims had been discovered in Swedish banks.

03/12/97 Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti arrived for a 3-day visit to New York and Washington aimed at improving Switzerland’s image after months of criticism. He met with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and then Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat.

03/15/97 The French newspaper, Le Monde, reported that several French banks kept funds deposited by Jewish owners during the war that are today reportedly worth $135 million. Le Monde’s investigation concluded that government bureaucracy and confusion after the war were to blame rather than any intentional policy.

03/18/97 The Simon Wiesenthal Center called for the Swiss government to open its files on François Genoud, a Swiss Nazi who managed funds for the Third Reich and later provided funds for international terrorists. He was believed to have been a German and Swiss agent and was identified by Nazi-hunters as being instrumental in transferring gold from Swiss banks to Latin America via Spain.

03/20/97 The Swiss National Bank confirmed allegations that it had aided other European neutrals (Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey) to buy millions of dollars worth of gold looted by Nazi Germany. According to the study, the National Bank bought 1.7 billion Swiss francs (U.S. $425 million) of gold between 1940 and 1945.

03/31/97 A $7 billion class-action suit was filed in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan by attorney Edward Fagan on behalf of a dozen American plaintiffs against seven of Europe’s largest insurers. The suit accused the insurers of failing to honor policies bought before the war, and in some cases, giving the money to the Nazis. The seven companies named in the lawsuit are: Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A. of Trieste, Italy; Wiener Alliance Versicherungs Aktiengesellschaft of Vienna; A.G.F. Assurances Générale de France Vie of Paris; Riunione Adriatica Di Sicurta S.p.A
Consolidated of Milan; Der Anker Allegemeine Versicherungs AG of Vienna; Bavarian Reinsurance Co. (a.k.a. Bayerische Allegemeine Versicherungs) of Munich; and Allianz Group of Munich.

04/16/97 The Swiss cabinet appointed the president and three members of a board that will run the Humanitarian Fund for Holocaust victims. Rolf Bloch, head of the Swiss Federation of Hebrew Congregations, was named to lead the seven-member board. The other three Swiss appointees are all former local and federal government officials: Rene Bacher, Josi Meier, and Bernard Ziegler.

04/16/97 Portugal's Central Bank published a statistical breakdown of its wartime gold movements but stressed that it had found no evidence that it was actively involved in laundering gold looted by the Nazis.

05/01/97 The Swiss government appointed Elie Wiesel honorary chairman of the Swiss Humanitarian Fund. He later declined the position in a letter dated May 6 to Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti. The other two international members are Israeli statesman Yosef Burg and Israeli Knesset member Avraham Hirschson. Edgar Bronfman, head of the WJC, was later named as a replacement for Wiesel.

05/06/97 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee held a hearing on the shredding of Holocaust-era documents. This hearing was printed as Senate Hearing 105-152.

05/06/97 The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office published Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives, Part II on the fate of gold recovered by the Allies. This was a follow-up to its report of September 1996.

05/07/97 The Historian's Office of the U.S. Department of State released its report, U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II: Preliminary Study, also known as the "Eizenstat Report." Presented by William Slany, the chief historian at the State Department, and then Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, this report criticized the Swiss for having been bankers to the Nazis and, thus, accountable for prolonging the war. Greg Bradsher of the National Archives also prepared an appendix Finding Aid to accompany this report.

05/15/97 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee chaired by Senator D'Amato held a hearing on the Eizenstat Report that was broadcast live in Switzerland. This hearing was printed as Senate Hearing 105-176.

05/19/97 Senator D'Amato introduced private legislation (S.768) for the relief of Christoph Meili, his wife, and two children. Meili, a former Swiss security guard at the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), discovered documents relating to pre-World War II dormant accounts that were to be shredded. Meili took the documents and turned them over to Jewish groups. He was fired by the UBS and faced prosecution for violating Swiss banking secrecy laws before fleeing abroad.

05/28/97 Swiss historian Mario Cerruti uncovered a document from 1946 in Swiss diplomatic archives that detailed how Switzerland exported arms and war material to Nazi Germany worth $640 million between 1940 and September 1944.
U.S. House Banking and Financial Services Committee, chaired by Representative James Leach, held a hearing on gold taken from Holocaust victims by Nazi Germany. Among those testifying were Senator D'Amato, Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, and others.

Rolf Bloch, chairman of the Swiss Humanitarian Fund, announced that the Fund would dispense the first payments to needy Holocaust victims in Eastern Europe by October 1997.

The Swiss Banking Association (SBA) printed the names of over 1,870 pre-1945 dormant accounts in major newspapers worldwide and on the Internet.

President Clinton signed S.768, granting legal residency to Christoph Meili and his family. It became Private Law 105-1.

A bipartisan letter signed by 82 U.S. Senators was sent to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, urging his government to pay pensions to Holocaust survivors in the former Soviet Eastern Bloc. Germany had already paid more than $54 billion to Holocaust survivors in Western Europe, but very little to survivors in Eastern Europe.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced that an International Conference on Nazi Gold would take place in London, December 2-4, 1997.

Insurance claims by Holocaust survivors and heirs were the focus of a meeting by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) at its fall national meeting in Washington, D.C. A Holocaust Insurance Issues Working Group, headed by Deborah Senn, Washington State Commissioner of Insurance, discussed the class-action lawsuit filed by Holocaust survivors in March 1997 against 16 European insurance companies for unpaid insurance and property/casualty policies.

A study conducted for the WJC concluded that Nazi Germany looted $8.5 billion in gold from 1933-1945 from nations conquered by Germany. One-third of that amount came from individuals and private businesses, while two-thirds came from central banks. According to this study, an estimated $2 million to $3 million from privately owned gold ended up in Swiss banks.

The second list of dormant bank accounts was released by the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA). Included on this list were dormant accounts of non-Swiss citizens opened prior to May 9, 1945, bank accounts by Swiss nationals that had been dormant since the end of World War II, and additional non-Swiss dormant accounts that had been identified since the first list was published in July 1997.

Senator Mike DeWine introduced legislation (S.1379), the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, to amend the National Security Act of 1947 to require disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act regarding Nazi war criminal records and to create a special interagency group to identify, declassify, and make available to the public all Nazi war records held by the U.S. government.
11/13/97 Senator Alfonse D'Amato introduced legislation (S.1564), the Holocaust Victims Redress Act, to provide redress for inadequate restitution of assets seized by the U.S. government during World War II which belonged to victims of the Holocaust. This legislation called for $25 million over the next 3 years and an additional $5 million for archival research. S.1564 was passed by voice vote in the Senate.

11/13/97 A resolution (S.Con.Res.39) sponsored by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan was passed in the Senate. This concurrent resolution expressed "a sense of Congress that the German government should expand and simplify its reparations system, provide reparations to Holocaust survivors in Eastern and Central Europe, and set up a fund to help cover the medical expenses of Holocaust survivors."

12/02/97 The British Foreign Office hosted the Nazi Gold Conference in London, December 2-4, 1997. Forty-one nations were represented including the U.S. delegation headed by Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. At the Conference, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the establishment of a Fund for Victims of Nazi Persecution at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York that would go to survivors of the Holocaust. On behalf of the United States, Eizenstat pledged $4 million and an additional $25 million over the next 3 years with congressional approval. Argentina, Luxembourg, and others indicated that they would contribute to the fund, while France vowed to establish a separate fund. Criticism at the Nazi Gold Conference was aimed at the Vatican, whose representatives came only as observers. The Vatican is still unwilling to open its wartime archives to international scrutiny. A follow-up conference on the issues of looted art objects and insurance claims was planned for November 30 - December 3, 1998, at the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

12/17/97 A class-action suit was filed in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, on behalf of Fernande Bodner and Anna Zajdenberg, two French Jews living in New York, against nine international banks that operated in Vichy France. The banks named in the suit were Crédit Lyonnais, Société Générale, Banque Paribas, Banque National de Paris, Crédit Commercial de France, Crédit Agricole, Banque Française du Commerce Extérieur, Banque Worms Capital Corp., and Barclays Bank of the United Kingdom. The lawsuit alleged that the banks blocked access to Jewish accounts under the Vichy regime, and then after the war failed to account for them.

1998

01/07/98 Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau served a subpoena on the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), ordering it to hold two paintings by 19th century Austrian Expressionist painter Egon Schiele. The two paintings, "Portrait of Wally" and "Dead City," were part of a traveling exhibition, "Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection," from the Leopold Museum in Vienna, Austria. These paintings were claimed by the heirs of Lea Bondi Jaray and Fritz Grünbaum as family property lost during World War II.
01/12/98 The German government announced that it would create a $110 million reparations fund for Jewish survivors of the Holocaust living in countries of the former Eastern Bloc. The first payments were expected to begin in July 1998 and would assist between 18,000-20,000 Jewish survivors.

01/13/98 A report, The Unwanted Guests: Swiss Forced Labor Camps, 1940-1944, by American historian Alan M. Schom, was released by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. According to the report, 62 Swiss slave-labor camps held between 17,000 to 22,000 Jewish men, women, and children, who were required to perform mandatory labor with little or no compensation. Schom's report stated that 70% of Jewish refugees were held in these camps. Rabbi Marvin Hier, director of the Wiesenthal Center, called for Switzerland to apologize for its treatment of Jewish refugees.

01/14/98 Swiss officials objected to Schom's report on Swiss labor camps as "insulting and dishonest" and asserted that Jews were treated no differently from other refugees. Ambassador Thomas Borer, head of the Swiss Task Force investigating Switzerland's role during World War II, decried the allegations as "outrageous" and stated that Jews and gentiles were held equally in "no-frills" labor camps and that they received wages and meals similar to that of Swiss soldiers.

01/27/98 The Holocaust Victims Redress Act, S.1564, passed by voice vote in the House.

01/28/98 Representative Eliot Engel introduced H.R.3121, known as the Holocaust Victims Insurance Act. This legislation would require insurance companies to disclose how many policies they wrote for Holocaust victims and to pay the beneficiaries. Companies failing to report this information would face fines of $1,000 a day. It would also direct the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to produce a registry of Holocaust victims so that names could be checked against policies.

01/31/98 First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton praised Switzerland's efforts to "uncover the truth about its role in World War II" and its efforts to raise money for Holocaust victims in a speech given in Zurich during a 3-day visit.

02/03/98 Representative Mark Foley introduced H.R.3143, the Comprehensive Holocaust Accountability in Insurance Measure, which would prohibit insurance companies from doing business in the United States unless they disclose any financial dealings they had with Holocaust victims. It would also prohibit insured depository institutions from transacting business with or on behalf of such foreign insurance companies.

02/05/98 Senator D'Amato urged the Federal Reserve to reject the merger of U.S. operations of the Swiss Bank Corp. and the Union Bank of Switzerland. In a letter to Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, D'Amato stated that the two banks "have yet to provide answers to questions regarding their conduct in the disposition of assets of Holocaust victims and their record of collaboration with the Nazis during the war."
The U.S. House Banking and Financial Services Committee, chaired by Representative James Leach, held a hearing on the legal status of art objects seized by the Nazis and on World War II-era insurance claims by Holocaust survivors and their heirs. Among those testifying were Washington Insurance Commissioner Deborah Senn, Chair of the NAIC Working Group on Holocaust and Insurance Issues; Philippe de Montebello, director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Chuck Quackenbush, California Insurance Commissioner; and Ronald S. Lauder, chairman of the WJC's art recovery project.

President Clinton signed S.1564, the Holocaust Victims Redress Act, into law as Public Law 105-158.

Two Swiss insurance companies, Winterthur and Baloise Life/Basler Leben, refused to open their archives to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), the American organization that is investigating insurance policies belonging to Holocaust victims. Both claimed that they are private Swiss companies operating under Swiss laws, and therefore not answerable to foreign entities. Elan Steinberg, director of the WJC, responded to their position as "obscene."

In Cleveland, The Plain Dealer reported that museums in Poland and Ukraine dispute the ownership of 24 drawings by German Renaissance painter Albrecht Durer. They claimed that these works were stolen in 1941 and were later sold on the international art market after World War II. The drawings are currently located at the Cleveland Museum of Art and other museums worldwide, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Courtauld Institute Galleries in London. In 1952, the Cleveland Museum of Art bought two of the drawings for its collection, "The Dead Christ" and "The Ascension." Museum officials from the Lubomirski Museum in Lvov, Ukraine, and the Ossolinski Library in Wroclaw, Poland, want the drawings returned.

The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to send a resolution to the full Senate to approve the ratification of NATO expansion to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Senators Arlen Specter and Robert Torricelli vowed to introduce a resolution that would postpone the vote on NATO enlargement until life insurance claims of Holocaust victims were paid by the successor governments of the three former Communist nations. Edward J. Moskal, president of the Polish American Congress, reacted to this proposed resolution by stating, "The payment of life insurance claims is something that should be investigated and settled, but should not be used, in a malicious way, as a reason for stopping these nations from joining NATO, which is a matter of their security and ours."

Crédit Suisse Group, a Swiss bank, reached an undisclosed settlement with Estelle Sapir of Queens, New York, in return for her withdrawal from a class action suit filed in October 1996. According to a Swiss television report, the settlement was estimated at $500,000. Ms. Sapir was one of the original litigants in a class action suit that now has more than 10,000 complainants.

A class-action lawsuit was filed in federal court in Newark, New Jersey, against Ford Werke, a German subsidiary of Ford Motor Company. The lawsuit
alleged that Ford Werke, based in Cologne, Germany, made trucks for the German army during World War II and profited from forced civilian laborers from Belgium, Russia, Italy, and Ukraine. The lawsuit named one plaintiff, Elsa Iwanowa of Antwerp, Belgium, who claimed that she was taken from her home in Rostov, Russia, and forced to work in the Cologne factory with 2,000 other children from 1943-1945.

03/05/98 The Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, S.1379, cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill would allow two classes of U.S. archival material to be released to investigators: war crimes information on Nazi persecutions and information on transactions involving stolen assets from Holocaust victims.

06/02/98 The U.S. Department of State released its second historical report, entitled U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and Negotiations with Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey on Looted Gold and German External Assets and U.S. Concerns About the Fate of the Wartime Ustasha Treasury. This report examined Nazi Germany's trade with neutral countries, which helped fuel the Nazi war machine by providing commercial means of exchanging gold for critical war materials. It also looked at war profiteering by these neutral nations, including the United States, during the first 27 months of the war when it was also a neutral nation.

06/04/98 The U.S. House Banking Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3662, the Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998. This hearing was a continuation of an earlier hearing on the traffic of Nazi gold looted during World War II, the theft of Holocaust victims' assets, and belated postwar restitution efforts.

06/19/98 Crédit Suisse, Swiss Bank Corp., and Union Bank of Switzerland offered $600 million to settle unclaimed dormant account claims. Their offer was rejected by the WJC and other Jewish groups.


06/29/98 Holocaust survivors sue the Swiss National Bank for allegedly laundering proceeds from looted Nazi gold.

07/15/98 British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the beneficiaries of the United Kingdom's £1 million contribution to the "International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution." One-third would go to the Board of Deputies of British Jews for needy survivors in the United Kingdom; and two-thirds would go to the American Joint Distribution Committee through the World Jewish Restitution Organization for projects providing food and medical care to needy survivors in Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine.

07/22/98 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee chaired by Senator D'Amato held a hearing on the assets of Holocaust victims. Among those testifying were Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs Stuart Eizenstat; Jean Ziegler, a member of the Swiss Parliament and author of The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead; Carl McCall, Comptroller of the State of New York; Israel Singer, Secretary General of the WJC; and others.
Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus formed an international commission to evaluate the crimes committed by the Nazi and Soviet occupation regimes in Lithuania. The 14-member Commission includes historians, human rights specialists, representatives of international Jewish organizations, and lawyers from Lithuania, Russia, the United States, and Germany.

The largest commercial Swiss banks (Crédit Suisse and the Union Bank of Switzerland), Holocaust survivors, and Jewish groups reached a $1.25 billion settlement of wartime assets. This action halted an economic boycott against Swiss banks, institutions, and companies. The $20 billion class action lawsuit in federal district court in Brooklyn brought against these two commercial banks was dropped, as well as a suit in the Northern District in California. (See CRS Report 98-699, *Holocaust Survivor and Heir Lawsuits to Recover Swiss Bank Deposits* for further details.) This settlement, however, did not resolve a separate lawsuit filed in the Southern District of New York in October 1996 against three major Swiss insurance companies (Crédit Suisse, the Union Bank of Switzerland, and Swiss Bank Corp., also known as the Swiss National Bank).

A "Memorandum of Intent" was signed by five large European insurance companies (Allianz, Generali, Zurich Group, AXA-UAP, and Nordstern), two survivor organizations (the World Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Restitution Organization), and 39 states to establish a process to investigate insurance policies of victims of the Holocaust and to consult with European governments and the insurance industry.

An agreement was reached between Chicago art collector Daniel Searle and the descendants of Dutch victims of the Holocaust, Friedrich and Louise Gutmann, concerning a pastel "Landscape with Smokestacks" by Edgar Degas. Searle will relinquish a half-interest in the painting to the Gutmann heirs and donate his half-interest to the Art Institute of Chicago. The Art Institute will have the work appraised, then buy the other half-interest from the Gutmann heirs. The agreement settled a lawsuit by the Gutmann heirs that was scheduled to go to trial in September 1998.

Assicurazioni Generali, Italy's largest insurance company, agreed to pay $100 million to Holocaust survivors and heirs of Holocaust victims for life insurance policies and annuity policies that it refused to honor after the war. The agreement was presented to Judge Michael Mukasey in U.S. District Court in Manhattan.

A 31-page class action lawsuit was filed in Brooklyn, New York, against 12 German companies including Audi, Daimler-Benz, BMW, Krupp, Leica cameras, Siemens, and Volkswagen by the same lawyers who handled the Swiss banking and insurance cases, Edward Fagan in New York and Michael Witt in Munich. They also filed lawsuits against Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank, as well as the chemical company, Degussa, for using slave laborers and from profiting from the war.

A separate lawsuit was filed in Newark, New Jersey, against Volkswagen only by former slave laborers in their Nazi-run factories.
09/09/98 The Tripartite Gold Commission (TGC) disbanded after 52 years. The TGC was created by the victorious Allied forces of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to return gold seized by Nazi Germany from the central banks of occupied countries. An estimated $60 million to $70 million has been promised by the TGC to the fund, known as the "Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution," created during the London Nazi Gold Conference in December 1997. Of the original 370 tons of foreign monetary reserves that the Allies recovered in 1945, only $300,000 belonging to the former Yugoslavia remains on deposit in the Bank of England until Yugoslavia's successor states agree on its distribution. The United States pledged $25 million, Britain $1.7 million, and France $3.45 million to this fund.

09/11/98 Volkswagen announced a $12 million private relief fund to compensate World War II slave laborers. It was the first time a German company acknowledged its "moral and legal responsibility" to compensate Nazi-era slave laborers. The fund will be supervised by a prominent international board, including former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, and will decide how the money will be disbursed.

09/23/98 Following Volkswagen's lead, Siemens, a German electronics firm, announced a $12 million fund to compensate former slave laborers that were forced to work for the firm by the Nazis during World War II. Siemens estimated that between 10,000 to 20,000 slave laborers worked in its wartime factories.

10/15/98 The Austrian government announced the establishment of a commission of historians to study all aspects of the country's restitution efforts to victims of the Holocaust. The commission will be funded by Parliament and comprised of six members under the leadership of Clemens Jabloner, President of Austria's High Administrative Court.

10/15/98 Two Austrian companies (auto engineering firm Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG and steelmaker Voest) and three German firms (construction companies Phillip Holzmann AG, Dyckerhoff AG, and Leonhard-Moll AG) were named in two separate class-action lawsuits in New York. These companies are accused of using and profiteering from slave laborers at their factories during World War II. The lawsuit against the two Austrian firms is the first of its kind targeting Austria's wartime industry.

10/21/98 The first meeting of the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) was held in New York. Former U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger was appointed chairman of the ICHEIC, and five working groups were established.

11/30-12/3/98 The Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets was hosted by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to discuss the various issues relating to Holocaust-era assets. Attending were representatives of 44 nations and 13 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who discussed restitution practices and policies relating to insurance claims, looted works of art, and communal property. Guidelines for the restitution of works of art looted by the Nazis were established and known as the "Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art." Some of the recommendations included: the opening of all records and archives where
information may be found; the identification of looted works of art; creation of a central registry for such information; and a “just and fair” process by which claimants may come forward seeking lost works of art and cultural objects.

12/04/98 A “Symposium on Records and Research Relating to Holocaust-Era Assets” was held at the U.S. National Archives (Archives II) in College Park, Maryland. This symposium was in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, and Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs at the Department of State, gave the opening address. The Symposium examined how the documents located in the National Archives were being used by the U.S. government and private researchers to locate documents pertaining to wartime assets.

For complete detail of all Holocaust-era legislation introduced and passed during the 105th Congress (1997-1998), refer to CRS Report 98-903, Holocaust-Related Legislation of the 105th Congress.

1999

01/06/99 U.S. Representative Eliot Engels introduced H.R. 126, the Holocaust Victims Insurance Act, a bill to provide for the recovery of insurance issued for victims of the Holocaust. This bill was then referred to the House Committee on Commerce. This was the first bill introduced relating to Holocaust-era assets in the 106th Congress.

01/06/99 U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter introduced H.R.271, Justice for Holocaust Survivors Act. This bill would allow Holocaust survivors who are currently U.S. citizens, but who were not U.S. citizens during the Holocaust and who have been denied reparations by the German government in the past, to sue the German government in the United States to claim restitution for their incarceration in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. This bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

01/11/99 President Clinton announced the creation of a presidential working group to locate, inventory, and quickly make public all classified records held by the United States relating to Nazi war criminals. The Nazi War Criminal Records Interagency Working Group will recommend documents for declassification at the National Archives, according to Executive Order 13110 and Public Law 105-246.

01/19/99 U.S. Representative David McIntosh introduced H.R. 390, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received for settlement of certain claims of Holocaust survivors. This bill was then referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

01/19/99 H.R. 126, Holocaust Victims Insurance Act, was referred to the House Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials.

01/26/99 The Contact Bureau on Looted Art opened officially in Bern, Switzerland. Its scope of activity includes processing inquiries which affect the Swiss federal
collections as well as offering information and support on general questions concerning looted art in Switzerland and research on looted art.

02/16/99 German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder announced the creation of a fund, projected to amount to $3.5 billion to $4.6 billion and financed by 12 German companies, to compensate victims of the Nazis during World War II. The creation of the “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” fund, according to remarks by Chancellor Schroeder, was “to counter lawsuits, particularly class action suits, and to remove the basis of the campaign being led against German industry and our country.” Payments are expected to start by September 1, 1999. The 12 companies contributing to this fund are: Allianz insurance, BASF, Bayer, BMW, Daimler-Chrysler (formerly Daimler-Benz), Degussa, Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, Hoechst, Krupp, Siemens, and Volkswagen. This list of 12 companies includes automakers, banks, chemical production, insurance, and other German industrial sectors accused of profiting from forced/slave labor during World War II.

02/25/99 H.R. 271, Justice for Holocaust Survivors Act, was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims.

03/05/99 Five Holocaust survivors forced to help build a factory for German airplanes during World War II filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court. It is the first lawsuit filed in California seeking compensation for victims of Nazi slave labor. The lawsuit was filed against Philip Holtzman AG, a multibillion-dollar German construction company that does considerable business in the United States.

03/25/99 U.S. Representative Jerry Weller introduced H.R. 1292, a bill to provide that no federal income tax shall be imposed on amounts received by Holocaust victims or their heirs.

03/25/99 Former slave laborers under the Nazis, wearing yellow Stars of David and their old concentration camp numbers, protested outside an IG Farben shareholders’ meeting in Frankfurt, Germany. They were protesting a plan by the German government to establish an industry wide-fund for all those forced to work for the Third Reich. Instead, the plaintiffs in the U.S.-based lawsuits demanded direct payments from the German companies for which they worked during the war and an apology. The German government fund is designed to dismiss the growing number of class action lawsuits against German companies that profited by using slave labor during the war years.

03/27/99 The accounting firm of Coopers & Lybrand requested that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) provide them with genealogical records that could help identify over 300,000 Jewish victims of the Holocaust who may have established bank accounts in Switzerland. Coopers & Lybrand asked for the records to further their work with the Volcker Commission, which is still auditing Swiss bank accounts for unclaimed accounts held by Holocaust victims and heirs.

03/30/99 The U.S. Department of State announced plans to give $4 million to an international relief fund that will assist needy survivors of Nazi persecution with food, medicine, and clothing in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Many of these Holocaust survivors were “double victims” of Nazi Germany and the Soviet
Union. This international relief fund, known as the Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution, was created during the London Nazi Gold Conference in December 1997. Overall, the United States has pledged $25 million over 3 years (P.L. 105-158, sec. 103), and 17 other nations have pledged more than $61 million.

03/30/99 The French Banking Association (AFB) announced that the French Foreign Ministry requested that the U.S. District Court for Eastern New York dismiss two lawsuits by Holocaust survivors against French banks in the United States on the grounds that these lawsuits disrupt and interfere with current efforts by the French government to compensate victims of the Holocaust in France. The French banks being pursued by victims in the United States are: Société Général; Banque Paribas; the French subsidiary of Barclay's Bank; Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole; the CNCA unit, Crédit Agricole Indosuez; Crédit Lyonnais; Banque National de Paris; Crédit Commercial de France; Banque Française du Commerce Extérieur, and Banque Worms Capital Corp.

03/31/99 A spokesman at the U.S. Department of State said that they would not intervene in U.S. courts on behalf of the French government and would not intervene in any private litigation.

03/31/99 A class action complaint was filed in San Francisco Superior Court by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, California Governor Gray Davis, and representatives of Holocaust survivors who reside in California against German and American companies that used slave labor and "Aryanized" Jewish assets during the Holocaust. The companies named in the lawsuit are Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, Commerzbank AG, Deutsche Lufthansa, VIAG, Ford Motor Company, and General Motors Corp.

03/31/99 The Swiss Finance Ministry set up a timetable for potential sales of excess Swiss gold reserves. If approved by public referendum in March 2000, a portion of the sale of the surplus gold reserves will be used for the Swiss Solidarity Fund.

03/31/99 The Swiss Foreign Ministry announced that it would disband the Special Task Force on Holocaust Issues created in October 1996 and headed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer. Ambassador Borer led Swiss efforts to deal with international criticism that Switzerland served as a wartime financial center with close commercial ties to Nazi Germany.

04/13/99 U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham introduced S. 779, a bill to provide that no federal income tax shall be imposed on amounts received by Holocaust victims of their heirs.

04/23/99 The Swiss Supreme Court called for an investigation into allegations by Joseph Spring, a Jewish refugee during World War II, whom Swiss border guards handed over to the Nazis in 1943. Mr. Spring currently resides in Australia and is requesting $67,000 in compensation from the Swiss government for being twice turned away at the French-Swiss border, and, on his second attempt, being turned over to the Germans and sent to Auschwitz, where he survived the war. In its decision, the high court ruled against the government, which had said that Spring's claim had no legal basis.
04/29/99 The French government returned an oil painting by Claude Monet, "Nympheas, 1904" (Water Lilies, 1904) to the heirs of its French-Jewish owner, Paul Rosenberg. Rosenberg was an art dealer and collector, and in 1940 the Germans confiscated his art collection and sent it to Germany. Although the painting was returned to France in 1949, it was not identified as part of the Rosenberg collection until it appeared in a show, "Monet in the 20th Century," at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in the fall of 1998. French Culture Minister Catherine Trautmann presided over the ceremony and handed the painting back to Rosenberg's daughter-in-law, Elaine, and granddaughter, Elizabeth Clark.

04/30/99 At a conference held at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, California's top officials and legislators led by Governor Gray Davis and Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush announced the formation of the "California Holocaust Insurance Alliance" consisting of 25 organizations and individuals calling for the suspension of 64 insurance companies practicing in California that have failed to honor Holocaust-era claims.

05/05/99 Anne Gazeau-Secret, the French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, announced that the French government acknowledged it had yet to fulfill its pledge from June 1998 to contribute $3.23 million to needy victims of the Holocaust since it needed additional time to consult with Jewish groups in France on how the funds should be distributed.

05/06/99 The Washington Post reported on a government commission in Buenos Aires, the Argentine Committee of Inquiry into Nazi Activities, uncovering evidence in three letters written in the 1950s during the dictatorship of Juan Peron that indicated that the Argentine Central Bank served as a temporary repository for Nazi gold after the fall of the Third Reich.

05/12/99 The U.S. Department of State hosted an international conference of government, business, and private groups on reparations for victims of forced or slave labor by the Nazi regime during World War II. Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs, and Bodo Hombach, chief of staff for German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, presided at the gathering. Foreign delegations from Germany, Belarus, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Israel, Poland, and Russia attended. Also in attendance were officials and lawyers for the 16 German companies that have pledged to set up a fund for these forced/slave laborers by September 1, 1999, the 60th anniversary of the start of World War II. Under Secretary Eizenstat announced the creation of two working groups, one to set eligibility rules for payments from the fund and the other to deal with ways to ensure legal closure for the 16 major German companies involved.

05/15/99 A $3 billion lawsuit was filed in Frankfurt, Germany, on behalf of 22,000 Poles who were forced into Nazi slave labor. The lawsuit was filed against Dresdner Bank for its wartime role in financing Nazi war production.

05/23/99 The Jewish Claims Conference and the World Jewish Congress are opposing a $40 million settlement of a lawsuit against two Austrian banks, Bank Austria and its subsidiary, Creditanstalt. At issue is a proposed agreement by the
banks to make restitution of funds lost by Jewish depositors beginning in 1938, when Austria came under the control of Nazi Germany.

05/31/99 The Volcker Commission announced its completion of a 3-year probe of Holocaust-era assets in Swiss banks. A final report from the commission is expected in September 1999.

06/10/99 Industry representatives of 16 German companies announced the creation of a compensation fund in an effort to settle slave labor lawsuits against the following companies that profited from Nazi-era slave labor: Allianz, BASF, Bayer, BMW, Commerzbank, Daimler Chrysler (settling on behalf of Daimler-Benz), Deutsche Bank, Degussa-Huels, Deutz, Dresdner Bank, Thyssen-Krupp, Hoechst, RAG, Siemens, Volkswagen, and VEBA. Called the “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” fund, it will be administered with the help of the German government and estimated at $1.7 billion. Lump-sum payments would be based on need and on 6-months or longer of slave labor service. Attorneys representing victims in the class action lawsuit against these companies charge that the total fund is inadequate and that 6 months or longer of forced/slave labor was the exception rather than the rule since many laborers lasted barely 3 months under such brutal conditions. The aim of these German companies in setting up this fund is to protect them from any future claims.

06/16/99 The Seattle Museum of Art announced that it is returning a $2-million painting, “Odalisque” (1928) by Henri Matisse, to the heirs of Paul Rosenberg, a prominent Jewish art dealer in Paris, whose collection was confiscated by the Nazis during World War II. This decision was the first by an American art museum to return a work of stolen art after an investigation by the Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP), which discovered that the painting had been stolen from Rosenberg’s storage vault in 1941 and had never been recovered by its original owner.

06/18/99 A group of Polish Holocaust survivors filed a class action lawsuit against Poland in the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, New York. The lawsuit seeks to recover property and assets that were illegally seized by the Nazis during World War II and later by the Polish government after the war.

06/21/99 The U.S. State Department confirmed that the German government wired $18 million to the U.S. Treasury Department for distribution to more than 200 Americans who survived Nazi-run concentration camps during World War II. These recipients were American citizens who, at the time of their incarceration, worked in slave labor camps, or were American soldiers who were prisoners of war and held in recognized concentration camps. The exact number of claimants was not disclosed by the State Department nor the exact amount each claimant would receive.

06/22/99 Melvyn Weiss, a U.S. attorney representing victims of Nazi-era slave labor in one of three class-action lawsuits, expressed doubt that an agreement would be reached by September 1, 1999, on a compensation fund set up by 16 German companies charged with profiting from slave labor during World War II. Weiss met with lawyers representing the 16 companies, German Chancellery Minister Bodo

06/23/99 Representatives from five European insurance companies (Assicurazioni Generali of Italy, Allianz of Germany, AXA of France, Winterthur and Zurich of Switzerland) met in Jerusalem to negotiate a settlement for Holocaust-era claims. These companies are members of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) that is trying to establish procedures on how to identify and pay claims on insurance policies issued to Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

06/30/99 U.S. Representative Rick Lazio introduced H.R.2401, a bill to amend the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 to extend the period by which the final report is due and to authorize additional funding.

07/04/99 The Portuguese newspaper Público reported that the investigative committee appointed by the Portuguese government in June 1998, and headed by former President Mario Soares, had determined that Portugal did not launder gold looted by the Nazi regime, and therefore is not obligated to pay any compensation. The committee was formed after the release of the second historical report by the U.S. Department of State that stated that the fascist regime of Antonio Salazar had received gold estimated between $500 million and $1 billion from Nazi Germany.

07/07/99 The Dutch Welfare Ministry announced that it will pay $10.45 million to 122 victims of Germany’s occupation of the Netherlands during World War II as part of its pledge to return gold and other assets looted by the Nazis to victims of the Holocaust. Over 300 individuals and organizations submitted applications between September 1998 and March 1999. Most of the money is being spread among various Jewish groups to settle individual claims except for 5% of the money, which will be set aside for other victims of Nazi persecution in the Netherlands, including homosexuals, Romas (gypsies), and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

07/07/99 Italian insurance company Generali and German insurance giant Allianz approved an initial payment to seven heirs of insured Holocaust victims. These insurance policies were issued by Generali and by Reunione Adriatica, the Italian subsidiary of Germany’s Allianz, prior to the outbreak of World War II. The amount of the payment was not disclosed pending further examination.

Selected Print Sources

Articles (selected newspapers, magazines, and journals)


[While fighting for return of stolen assets, lawyers for Holocaust victims spar over leadership and fees.]


[The Nazis looted an Albrecht Durer masterpiece which ended up at the National Gallery of Art, but where it really belongs is now in dispute.]


——. A Nazi-Era Bill Finally Comes Due. *Newsweek*, February 1999: 40. [Survivors of World War II-era slave labor camps file lawsuits against companies that profited from their work.]


Sage, Thomas A. Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Legal and Moral Juxtaposition of Switzerland's Bank Secrecy Laws as Illustrated by the


Books


[This work was later republished in London in 1996 under a new title, *Stolen Treasure: The Hunt for the World's Lost Masterpieces*.]


[First published in Switzerland as *Die Schweiz, das Gold, und die Toten in 1997*.]

CRS Reports


Government Documents (including selected foreign documents)


U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. Swiss Banks and the Status of Assets of Holocaust Survivors or Heirs. Hearing, 104th
Independent Reports and Studies

*Historic report of the German Reichsbank by the German Federal Archives in Berlin. This report details the infamous “Melmer Gold”— gold and jewelry stolen from victims in Auschwitz and other death camps. It discusses 26 secret files recently uncovered chronicling receipt of gold stolen from Jews in concentration camps. In German only.


Selected Internet Sources

Art Loss Register at: [http://www.artloss.com/intro.htm]. The Art Loss register is “the largest private database of stolen and missing works of art, antiques, and valuables worldwide” with offices in London, New York, and Dusseldorf and has Web links to auction houses such as Sotheby and Christie’s. Their objective is to assist law enforcement agencies in the process of identifying and recovering stolen works of art. Click on “Holocaust Losses” to find information on how Holocaust victims may locate missing or stolen property.

Art Newspaper at: [http://www.theartnewspaper.com/]. Click on “For the Record” at the contents page for “The Art Trade under the Nazis: the not so secret list” from January 1999 issue of The Art Newspaper. It has the complete list of names in the 1946 Office of Strategic Services (OSS) report on the art trade under the Nazis. The World Jewish Congress “revealed” its existence in November 1998, although art historians and scholars had known about the list for years. The art dealers are listed by the following countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Luxembourg.

British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) at: [http://www.fco.gov.uk/]. This Web site has information on the London Nazi Gold Conference (December 2-4, 1997); click on “Key Foreign Policy Themes” and scroll down to “Nazi Gold” or go directly to: [http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/keythemehome.asp?9]. Electronic versions of History Notes No: 11, Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives, and No. 12, Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives: Part II, Monetary Gold, Non-Monetary Gold and the Tripartite Gold Commission, are available in full text.

Britain in the USA at: [http://www.britain-info.org/bis/fordom/nazigold/events.stm]. This Web page on Nazi Gold has links to the FCO, news conferences, transcript of the final report of the Nazi Gold Conference, information on the International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution, and a link to the Enemy Property Web site.
Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C. at: [http://www.cmht.com/]. This is the Web site of the Washington, D.C.-based law firm that successfully sued the two largest Swiss banks and reached a $1.25 billion settlement in August 1998. The site provides access to information on pending litigation regarding slave laborers in Nazi-run factories and concentration camps, and a combined questionnaire for the Swiss banks' settlement, and pending German, Austrian, and French banks' litigation.

Commission for Art Recovery at: [http://www.wjc-artrecovery.org/]. This is the Web site for the Commission for Art Recovery of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and affiliated with the World Jewish Restitution Organizations (WJRO). This Web site has information on their efforts to locate and identify looted works of art and their cooperation with other organizations such as the Art Loss Register and HARP. Information about members of the commission and how to file a claim is provided.

Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP) at: [http://www.lostart.org/index.htm]. This Web site is maintained by HARP and the Washington, D.C.-based National Jewish Museum as a clearinghouse for research and documentation of "Jewish cultural losses suffered between 1933 and 1945." Included is information on their research database, projects, publications, recent news articles/press, and highlights from their conference on September 4, 1997.

Holocaust Victims Asset Litigation at: [http://www.swissbankclaims.com/]. This Web page is the official site for Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation against Swiss Banks and other Swiss entities. Included is information on the proposed $1.25 billion settlement of a class action lawsuit against Swiss banks for their conduct during World War II. The deadline for filing comments, objections, or suggestions to the settlement is October 22, 1999. A fairness hearing will be held on November 29, 1999, on whether the proposed settlement should be approved. Note: No claims process or plan of allocation has yet been established.

International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) at: [http://www.ICHEIC.org/]. This Web site is the Home Page of the ICHEIC headed by Lawrence S. Eagleburger and includes information on processing a claim, text of meetings, list of participating insurance commissioners, legislation, text of the Memorandum of Understanding, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

National Archives Records and Administration (NARA) at: [http://www.nara.gov/research/assets/]. Holocaust-Era Assets Records and Research at the NARA Web site lists findings aids to primary documents at the Archives, declassified documents, text of research and symposium papers, and a current bibliography. This Web site also provides information on events such as the NARA symposium, "Records and Research Relating to Holocaust-Era Assets" held on December 4, 1998, in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, November 30-December 3, 1998. Full texts of papers presented at the symposium and Web links to scholarly work on researching looted art and insurance claims is provided.

National Association Insurance Commission (NAIC) Working Group on Holocaust and Insurance Issues at: [http://www.naic.org/]. Click on "news releases" and search "Holocaust and claims" at this Web site. The NAIC Web site lists the
meetings and related activities by the NAIC on World War II-era life insurance policies of Holocaust victims and their heirs.

Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States (PCHA) at [http://www.pcha.gov/]. This is the official Web site of the PCHA that was established by Public Law 105-186 and tasked with conducting original research into the fate of assets taken from Holocaust victims which later came into the possession of the U.S. government. The Commission's main goal is to provide a historical account of those valuables (art and cultural objects, gold, and other financial property) and to advise the President on future restitution policies. The PCHA consists of 21 members.

Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles at: [http://www.wiesenthal.com/]. At this Web site, click on "Holocaust Assets" for information on British, French, and Swiss banks, and insurance accounts as well as the Center's response to the recovery of looted Nazi gold at: [http://www.wiesenthal.com/response/v19n3nazigold.html].

Swiss Dormant Accounts at: [http://www.dormantaccounts.ch/]. This Web site is maintained by the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA) and contains the lists of names of dormant account holders from July 23, 1997, and October 29, 1997, and directions on how to file a claim and locate contact information in the United States and abroad.

Swiss Embassy at: [http://www.swissemb.org/press/html/topic_ww_ii.html]. This Web page, Topic Switzerland & World War II, is maintained by the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington, D.C., and provides official links to Swiss government sources like the Swiss Federal Archives, Swiss Federal Assembly, Unclaimed Assets—Registration Office 1962-1999, and additional links to other international sources.


Swiss Solidarity Foundation (a.k.a. Swiss Foundation for Solidarity) at: [http://www.admin.ch/solidarity/index.htm]. In March 1997, Swiss President Arnold Koller advanced the idea of creating a long-term Solidarity Foundation for humanitarian aid at home and abroad. This undertaking, endorsed by the President of the Swiss National Bank (SNB), would be aimed at offering a dignified future to real or potential victims of poverty, hardship, and violence, and would include aid to victims of the Holocaust. The Foundation would support long-term projects, finance emergency aid, and award a Solidarity Prize. Its work would be financed from the proceeds of currently uninvested gold reserves of the National Bank. This financing aspect of the Foundation is scheduled for public referendum in March 2000. This Web site also provides information on its goals and objectives and current news articles on the Foundation.
Swiss Special Task Force at [http://www.eda-tf.ethz.ch/]. Created by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in October 1996 in response to the controversy regarding Switzerland's role during World War II, it was headed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer. The Task Force officially disbanded on March 31, 1999. This Web site has links to additional Swiss government sources including the Bergier Commission Interim Report, May 1998, and Assets in Switzerland of Victims of Nazism and the Compensation Agreements with East Bloc Countries by Peter Hug and Marc Perrenoud, 13 December 1996-13 January 1997, at: [http://www.switzerland.taskforce.ch/W/TF/1_e.htm].

Switzerland & Holocaust Assets at [http://www.giussani.com/holocaust-assets/]. Maintained by a Swiss journalist, Bruno Giussani, this Web site is a “one-stop independent resource monitoring the controversy.” It has a running chronology of current events, selected electronic publications, and Web links to Swiss, American, British, and other sources worldwide on Switzerland and Holocaust-era assets.


U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (Holocaust Victims’ Assets) at: [http://www.ushmm.org/assets/index.html]. This Web site contains an International List of Current Activities Regarding Holocaust-era Assets and is a project of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets (November 30-December 3, 1998). It allows searching by types of assets (dormant bank accounts, insurance, gold, art, etc.) and by country, government, and private attempts to trace Holocaust assets. A list of archival resources is provided along with a list of U.S. activities regarding Holocaust-era assets. Information for Holocaust survivors and others seeking reparations is included along with information on the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research. The Proceedings from the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets is available full text and Web links to the National Archives, the U.S. Department of State, and other related Web sources are also provided.

U.S. House International Relations Committee (HIRC) at: [http://www.house.gov/international_relations/]. Click on “press releases” for the 105th Congress for a listing of the HIRC activities regarding Holocaust-era assets. Also under “Meetings and Hearings,” click on “105th Congress, second session” for a transcript of the full committee hearing, “Heirless Property Issues of the Holocaust” on August 6, 1998.

U.S. Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee at: [http://www.senate.gov/~banking] for committee hearings and press releases.

World Jewish Congress (WJC) at [http://www.virtual.co.il/orgs/orgs/wjc/]. At the Home Page, click on “Policy Dispatches” for full text of the following:

Click on “Policy Studies” index for full text of the following:
- Sweden and the Shoah: The Untold Chapters by Sven Fredrik Hedin and Goran Elgemyr.
- Movements of Nazi Gold: Uncovering the Trail by Sidney Zabludoff.
- Unmasking National Myths: Europeans Challenge Their History by Avi Beker.
- The Fate of Stolen Jewish Properties: The Cases of Austria and the Netherlands by Itamar Levine.

Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers

Listed below are the addresses, fax, and telephone numbers (including e-mail and Internet sites when available) of private and governmental organizations that are currently assisting with claims, compensation, and restitution of Holocaust-era assets (works of art, dormant bank accounts, unpaid insurance claims, property, etc.).

Allianz Insurance Group—There is no address listed but they do provide a 24-hour, multi-lingual help line for claimants seeking recovery of payments from property, casualty, and life insurance policies from this German company at 1-800-411-0118.

American Jewish Committee Research Department (regarding restitution of Jewish property in Central and Eastern Europe):

American Jewish Committee Research Department Tel: 212-751-4000
165 East 56th Street
New York, NY 10022-2746
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) for restitution for needy Holocaust victims in the United States who resided in the former Eastern Bloc during and after World War II from the “International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution.” This fund was created by the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and other nations during the London Nazi Gold Conference, December 1997. For claims in the United States contact:

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
711 3rd Avenue
New York, NY 10017-4014
Tel: (212) 687-6200
Fax: (212) 682-7262
E-mail: info@jdcny.org

Argentina — Commission of Enquiry into the Activities of Nazism in Argentina (CEANA) [in Spanish, Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de Las Actividades del Nazismo en la República Argentina (CEANA)]. An international panel of 17 members and 10 research units was created by President Carlos Menem on May 6, 1997, to investigate Argentina’s role in aiding escaped Nazi criminals, the transfer of looted Nazi treasures, and other wartime dealings with the Third Reich. All final reports from the 10 research units are expected by the end of June 1999. Contact them at:

Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de las Actividades del Nazismo en la República Argentina (CEANA)
Reconquista 1088
1023 Capital Federal
Attn: Guido Di Tella, President (Foreign Minister of Argentina)

Art Loss Register (regarding stolen or missing works of art) contact:
The Art Loss Register
666 Fifth Avenue, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10103
Tel: (212) 262-4831
Fax: (212) 262-4838
E-mail: alrnewyork@aol.com

Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A. (Italy’s largest insurance company) for application forms to file insurance claims or to request an archival research contact them at:

Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.
Policy Information Center
45 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 200
New York, NY 10111-0100
Tel: 1-800-456-8174

Austrian National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism
Thus far, 23,296 persons in 65 countries have received assistance through the fund. For more information, contact:

Austrian National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism
c/o Austrian Press and Information Service
3524 International Court, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-3027
Tel: (202) 895-6775
Fax: (202) 895-6772
E-mail: austroinfo@austria.org
Internet at: [http://www.austria.org/].
(British Government) Enemy Property Payment Scheme

During World War II, the British government confiscated property in the United Kingdom belonging to residents of countries that were at war with Britain and her allies. Unfortunately, some of the property confiscated belonged to victims of the Holocaust and was not returned to the rightful owners after the war. Information on filing a claim can be obtained from the Panel Secretariat at:

The Enemy Property Claims Assessment Panel
Bay 116-118
10 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0NN
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 171 215 3485
Fax: +44 171 215 3487
E-mail address: property.enemy@frmd.dti.gov.uk
Internet at: [http://www.enemyproperty.gov.uk]

California Holocaust Insurance Settlement Alliance contact:
California Department of Insurance
Attn: Leslie Tick or Risa Salat-Kolm
45 Fremont Street, 23rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Tel: 1-888-234-4636
Internet at: [www.insurance.ca.gov]

Claims for Jewish Slave-Labour Compensation

This association represents Jewish ghetto and concentration camp survivors who, during the Holocaust, were forcibly used by the Third Reich and German firms as slave labor in Germany and other nations occupied by the Nazis during World War II. Contact information in the United States is currently unavailable.

Claims for Jewish Slave-Labour Compensation
6 Poole Road
Woking, Surrey
GU21 1DY, United Kingdom

Tel: 01483 751541
Fax: 01483 771137

Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll—two law offices in Washington, D.C., and Seattle, Washington. For information on the $1.25 million lawsuit against Swiss banks on dormant war-era bank accounts and pending litigation on World War II-era slave laborers contact:

Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C.
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 500, West Tower
Washington, D.C. 20005

Tel: (202) 408-4600
Fax: (202) 408-4699
E-mail at lawinfo@cmht.com
Internet at: [http://www.cmht.com/]

Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C.
999 Third Avenue, Suite 3600
Seattle, Washington 98104

Tel: (206) 521-0080
Fax: (206) 521-0166

Commission for Art Recovery for a copy of a claim form and instructions contact:
Commission for Art Recovery
767 Fifth Avenue, Suite 4600
New York, NY 10153

Tel: (212) 521-0102
Fax: (212) 319-8681
E-mail: claims@rslmgmt.com
Internet at: [http://www.wjc-artrecovery.org/].
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Treasury Department
Anyone from the state of Pennsylvania with reason to believe that assets deposited in Swiss banks between January 1, 1933, and May 9, 1945, belonging to them or a relative to which they are an heir are urged to contact this office. Also, persons with claims on insurance policies issued by a European insurance company prior to and during World War II should contact this office as well. Unfortunately, no address is currently available.

Tel: 1-800-379-3999
Internet at: [http://www.treasury.state.pa.us/DefaultASearch.html]

Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc. (a.k.a “Claims Conference”) in the United States:

Mr. Gideon Taylor, Executive Director
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc.
5 East 26th Street, Suite 906
New York, NY 10010

Tel: (212) 696-4944
Fax: (212) 679-2126
E-mail: claimscon@aol.com

Dormant Swiss Bank Accounts—for information in the United States contact:
Ernst & Young, LLP
“Dormant Accounts”
P.O. Box 1880 Radio City Station
New York, NY 10101-1880

Tel: 1-800-662-7708

Embassy of Switzerland
2900 Cathedral Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Tel: (202) 745-7900
Fax: (202) 387-2564
Internet at: [http://www.swissemb.org/]

(German) Article 2 Fund
This fund was created to compensate Jewish victims in the former East Germany after the reunification of Germany. This decision was formalized in Article 2 of the "Agreement on the Enactment and Interpretation of the Unification Treaty" of September 18, 1990, that unified Germany. Applications for compensation under the Article 2 Fund are still being accepted. Jewish victims of Nazi persecution are eligible if they: 1) were 6 months or longer in a concentration camp or 18 months or longer in a ghetto or 18 months or longer in hiding; and 2) received no more than DM 10,000 in previous compensation; and 3) currently live under difficult financial circumstances. If eligible, compensation is a lifetime pension in the amount of DM 500 per month. Interested parties should request an application from:

Article 2 Fund
Claims Conference
15 East 26th Street, Room 906
New York, NY 10010

(German) Hardship Fund
Applications for compensation under the Hardship Fund are still being accepted. Compensation is available to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution who have received no previous compensation and currently live under difficult financial conditions.
Compensation under the Hardship Fund consists of a one-time payment of DM 5000. Contact the following:

Hardship Fund
Claims Conference
15 East 26th Street, Room 906
New York, NY 10010

Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP) at:
National Jewish Museum/HARP
1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-3278

Holocaust Claims Processing Office, New York State Banking Department at:
New York State Banking Department
Tel: 1-800-695-3318 (in the U.S.)
212-618-6983 (outside the U.S.)
Fax: (212) 618-6908
New York, NY 10006

International Commission on Holocaust Insurance Claims (ICHEIC). For World War II-era insurance claims, contact the address and telephone number listed below. Please note: Residents of California, Florida, New York, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania should also contact their state insurance commissioners for further updates.

International Commission on Holocaust Insurance Claims
Tel: (202) 289-4100
Fax: (202) 289-4101
Internet at: [http://www.ICHEIC.org]

National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) contact:
National Association of Insurance Commissioners
Tel: (202) 624-7790
Fax: (202) 624-8579
Internet at: [http://www.naic.org]

Norwegian Compensation Fund established by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice for persons who suffered anti-Jewish measures in Norway during World War II. Deadline for applications is November 1, 1999. Application forms are available from:

Civil Department of the Ministry of Justice
Tel: +47 22 24 54 51
Fax: +47 22 24 27 22
0030 Oslo, Norway
Internet at: [http://odin.dep.no/repub/97-98/stprp/82/engelsk/]

Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States
A non-partisan commission of 21 members established by Public Law 105-186, “to conduct a thorough study and develop a historical record of any assets obtained from Holocaust victims that came in possession or control of the United States government.” The commission will submit reports and recommendations to the
President of the United States for further administrative or legislative action. They can be contacted at:

Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States
Coordinator: Stu Loeser
901 15th Street N.W., Suite 350
Washington, D.C. 20005
Internet at [http://www.pcha.gov]

Swiss Bankers Association (SBA)
Box 4182
4002 Basle, Switzerland
Internet at: [http://www.dormantaccounts.ch]

Swiss Bureau on Looted Art contact:
Dr. Andrea F.G. Rascher, J.D.
Contact Bureau on Looted Art
Federal Office of Culture
Hallwylstr. 15, CH-3003 Berne
Switzerland

Swiss Holocaust Task Force (officially disbanded on March 31, 1999)
EDA
3003 Berne, Switzerland
Internet at [http://www.switzerland.taskforce.ch]

Swiss Special Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoah
In the United States, contact the Application Processing Center at 1-800-549-6864. This fund was created in February 1997 by the Swiss Federal Council to assist needy victims in the United States, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Note: new applications are no longer being accepted. On February 26, 1999, checks of $502 each were mailed to accepted applicants. The notification letters to those applicants who did not meet the eligibility criteria was also mailed on that date. Final judgement on disputed claims will be made by the end of August 1999.

Swiss Special Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoah
Waaghausgasse 18
3003 Berne, Switzerland

United Restitution Organization provides legal assistance for individuals in claims against Germany, for a nominal fee. Contact them at:

United Restitution Organization
570 7th Avenue
Suite 1106
New York, NY 10018

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024
Internet at [http://www.ushmm.org/index.html]
The World Jewish Congress (WJC), American Section  
501 Madison Avenue, 17th Floor  
New York, NY 10022-5602  
Tel (212) 755-5770  
Fax: (212) 755-5883  
Internet at: [http://www.virtual.co.il/orgs/orgs/wjc/]

The World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO) is headquartered in Israel:  
Mr. Eliyahu Spanic, Director General  
Tel: (972-2) 561-2497/8  
World Jewish Restitution Organization  
Fax: (972-2) 561-2496  
Radak 7, Jerusalem 92301, Israel  
Internet at: [http://ja-wzo.org.il/wjro/whoweare.html].
The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II: A Chronology (May 7, 1995, to July 7, 1999) and Resource Guide

July 22, 1999

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Information Research Specialist
Information Research Division

Congressional Research Service • The Library of Congress
ABSTRACT

This report presents a chronology of recent investigations (May 7, 1995, to July 7, 1999) into the identification and recovery of assets (dormant bank accounts, works of art, looted gold, unpaid insurance claims, etc.) that were lost or stolen during World War II and the Holocaust. This report features a broad overview of the recent activities by private individuals, organizations, and governments such as Germany, Switzerland, the United States, and other nations, as well as providing a comprehensive bibliography of print and electronic sources. A list of private and governmental organizations that are assisting with the claims of victims of the Holocaust and their heirs is also included. This report will be updated as events warrant.

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The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II:  
A Chronology (May 7, 1995, to July 7, 1999)  
and Resource Guide

Summary

This report is a compilation of recent investigations (May 7, 1995 - July 7, 1999) into the role of Swiss banks and other institutions dealing with the recovery of hidden or stolen assets of victims of the Holocaust from World War II (1939-1945). Included is an overview of the worldwide inquiry by Switzerland, the United States Congress, and the governments of other nations in the following areas: dormant bank accounts, looted art, and cultural objects; Nazi gold transfers; policy claims against European insurance companies by Holocaust survivors and their heirs; and recent lawsuits by former slave laborers in Nazi-run factories in Germany and other Nazi-occupied territories. A selected list of printed and electronic resources is included along with the addresses and telephone numbers of organizations currently assisting victims of the Holocaust and their heirs from the World War II era with claims and reparations.

Related reports on this topic include the following: CRS Report 98-903, Holocaust-Related Legislation of the 105th Congress; CRS Report 98-699, Holocaust Survivor and Heir Lawsuits to Recover Swiss Bank Deposits; and CRS Report 98-329, Nazi War Crimes Records Disclosure: Public Law No. 105-246.
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The Holocaust—Recovery of Assets from World War II: A Chronology (May 7, 1995 to July 7, 1999) and Resource Guide

This chronology begins on May 7, 1995, with the official apology by then Swiss President Kaspar Villinger for his country’s role in denying asylum to countless Jewish refugees during World War II, and continues through to the activity of the ensuing Congresses including, the first hearings held by the U.S. Senate Banking Committee during the 104th Congress, second session (1996) on Swiss banks and Holocaust victims; legislation introduced and passed during the 105th Congress (1997-1998); and legislation recently introduced in the 106th Congress (1999-2000). The information presented is compiled from press reports and news articles from commercial databases such as NEXIS/LEXIS, WESTLAW, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), and “news tracker” via the Excite search engine on the Internet. This report also provides comprehensive lists of print and electronic resources, as well as useful addresses and telephone numbers of organizations assisting with Holocaust-era claims and reparations.

Chronology

1995

05/07/95 An official apology was issued by then President of Switzerland, Kaspar Villinger, for his country’s role in denying asylum to countless Jewish refugees during the war; he stated that Switzerland “bears a considerable burden of guilt for the treatment of the Jews.” His remarks were made in a speech to a special session of Parliament marking the 50th anniversary of V-E Day, the Allied victory in Europe.

09/01/95 The Swiss Banking Association (SBA) announced the discovery of $34 million in dormant bank accounts that may have belonged to Holocaust victims. The SBA also agreed to relax strict secrecy laws only for dormant accounts to help locate missing Jewish and non-Jewish assets from the war era.

1996

01/01/96 The SBA established a research center under the direction of Hanspeter Haeni, the bankers’ ombudsman, to act as an intermediary between persons seeking funds from orphaned or dormant accounts and the Swiss banking community.

02/07/96 The SBA announced that $32 million were found in 775 additional dormant accounts opened prior to 1945, including those of non-European origin.
04/23/96 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee headed by Senator Alfonse D'Amato held the first hearing on the status of assets deposited in Swiss banks by European Jews and other victims of the Holocaust. The methodology of the accounting records used by Swiss financial institutions came under sharp criticism as well as their treatment of Holocaust survivors/heirs, who had previously requested information on lost accounts but were rebuffed by Swiss bank officials. Printed as Senate Hearing 104-582.

05/02/96 The World Jewish Congress (WJC), the World Jewish Restitution Organization, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and the SBA signed an agreement that would relax Swiss banking secrecy laws to allow a joint independent commission to reexamine dormant Swiss accounts. An Independent Committee of Eminent Persons led by Paul Volcker, former chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve System, was chosen to audit an earlier study by the Swiss bankers' ombudsman. The other six panel members are Professor Curt Gasteyger, a Swiss historian; Alain Hirsh, an expert on security and accounting; Klaus Jakobi, a former Swiss ambassador to the United States; Avraham Burg, chairman of the Jewish Agency in Israel; Rueben Beraja, chairman of the Latin American Jewish Congress; and Ronald Lauder, an American representing Jewish interests.

09/10/96 The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office released its document, *Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives*, that alleged the Allies knew of the large amounts of Nazi gold exported to Switzerland, but were afraid of losing Swiss support in the postwar economic recovery plan. The report also alleged that the Swiss could be holding over $550 million worth of gold looted by Nazi Germany, valued today at $7 billion.

09/16/96 Besieged by international criticism, the Swiss Parliament agreed to a full investigation into assets stolen by the Nazis. An independent commission of historians and banking and legal experts was recommended to investigate Switzerland's role as a financial center for looted assets.

10/03/96 Gizella Weisshaus, a Holocaust survivor living in Brooklyn, filed the first class action suit in a U.S. federal court in New York against various Swiss banks for allegedly refusing to return assets deposited before and during the war. The banks named in the suit included the Swiss Bank Corporation (also known as the Swiss National Bank), the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), and other banking institutions. Over 4,000 plaintiffs, Jews and non-Jews worldwide, were named in the lawsuit.

10/04/96 The U.S. Department of State announced that William Slany, chief historian of the Department of State, would lead investigations in the National Archives regarding Nazi gold in Swiss banks. The focus would be on the diplomatic efforts by the United States after the war and diplomatic contacts with the Swiss government.

10/18/96 A second class action complaint was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York on behalf of three classes of plaintiffs against the UBS for withholding assets deposited during the war years. The three classes of plaintiffs were defined as: 1) rightful owners of looted assets (those who had their assets looted
prior to or during internment in the concentration camps); 2) slave laborers and their heirs; and 3) certain Swiss bank depositors and their heirs (those who made deposits prior to and during the war years and have been unable to reclalm them).

10/24/96 In response to increasing world scrutiny, Flavio Cotti, the Swiss foreign minister, created a special task force whose mission is to coordinate Swiss diplomatic response to international criticism of Switzerland and its financial institutions. This special task force is directed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer.

10/30/96 President Clinton wrote a letter to World Jewish Congress (WJC) president Edgar Bronfman and asked him to expand the probe into Nazi assets, stating that his Administration “would make it a priority to classify and make available to the public all the relevant documents.” President Clinton named Stuart Eizenstat, then Undersecretary of Commerce, to coordinate efforts by the U.S. government.

11/13/96 The Swiss bankers’ ombudsman, Hanspeter Haeni, announced that only 11,000 Swiss francs ($8,750) from 1.6 million francs ($1.26 million) in unclaimed dormant accounts were linked directly to Holocaust victims. These initial findings were sharply criticized by the WJC as “unilateral and unacceptable.”

11/19/96 Paul Volcker, head of the special auditing committee established in May 1996, announced that three American accounting firms (Arthur Andersen, KPMG Peat Marwick, and Price Waterhouse) were hired to investigate dormant Swiss accounts during the World War II era in response to criticism of the findings by the Swiss bankers’ ombudsman.

11/26/96 The Argentine Central Bank in Buenos Aires released five volumes of documents to the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. These transactions contained information on funds including gold transferred from banks in Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal to Argentina between 1939 and 1949.

11/27/96 The upper house of the Swiss Parliament voted 37-0 to examine Switzerland’s financial dealings with Nazi Germany and the fate of Jewish assets in Swiss accounts.

12/02/96 The WJC announced that it had uncovered documents from April 1945 in the National Archives pertaining to the ongoing inquiry. Letters from the United States embassy in Buenos Aires to acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew detailed the extent of Nazi investment in Argentina during the war. They were dubbed the “Morgenthau Letters” for including a letter from U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. dated February 1945. These documents reported that the Nazis had invested $500 million in commercial firms, $500 million in farms and ranches, $105 million in banks, and $40 million in insurance companies in Argentina between 1939 and 1944.

12/09/96 Both houses of the Swiss Parliament passed final legislation that waived the 3-month waiting period for laws to take force, thus allowing an independent panel to begin studying how much wealth was deposited into Swiss banks prior to and during World War II, and whether the Swiss had done enough to identify lost assets.
12/11/96 The U.S. House Banking Committee held a hearing on Swiss banks and Jewish assets during World War II. Among the witnesses before the committee were Special Ambassador Thomas Borer, chief of the Swiss Foreign Ministry Task Force on the Swiss bank question; Edgar Bronfman, president of the WJC; Paul Volcker, chairman of the Committee of Eminent Persons; Senator D'Amato, chairman of the U.S. Senate Banking Committee; and various Holocaust survivors/heirs.

12/19/96 Peter Hug and Marc Perrenoud, two independent historians commissioned by the Swiss government, released their report on Swiss postwar deals with Nazi gold. Authorized in October 1996, this report investigated claims that assets from victims of the Holocaust were used by the Swiss to compensate its citizens whose property was seized by countries in Eastern Europe. The report rejected the charge that such funds were paid directly to Swiss citizens, but said instead they were used to pay Poland and Hungary under postwar compensation agreements.

12/20/96 Swiss historian Jean-François Bergier was chosen to head a nine-member Independent Commission of Experts (ICE) directed by the Swiss government to reexamine its wartime activities. The other members are Swiss historians Jacques Picard and Jakob Tanner; Joseph Voyame, a lawyer and former official in the Swiss justice ministry; Harold James from Princeton University; Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, a Jewish historian from Warsaw; Saul Friedlaender, an Israeli historian; and Sybil Milton; with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

12/24/96 During an interview in Switzerland, outgoing Swiss President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz rejected the creation of a $250 million compensation fund as "blackmail" and said that "such a fund would be considered an admission of guilt." This fund was proposed earlier in the month to Special Ambassador Borer by representatives of the WJC and Senator D'Amato as a good-faith gesture to help elderly and destitute Jews pending the outcome of the investigations.

1997

01/05/97 Jewish leaders condemned Switzerland for not repudiating the remarks by Delamuraz. Israel Singer, secretary-general of the WJC, stated that the WJC and the Jewish Agency would support measures, including a boycott, unless Delamuraz's remarks were "rejected by Switzerland and its bankers clearly and decisively."

01/07/97 The Swiss cabinet offered to create a compensation fund with the $32 million found by the Swiss bankers' ombudsman in November 1996. Their offer was firmly rejected by the WJC.

01/12/97 A memorandum dated January 12, 1946, to the head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the CIA, was found in the National Archives. It detailed how the Swiss National Bank sent truckloads of gold looted by the Nazis to Spain and Portugal in vehicles bearing the Swiss emblem.
01/21/97  Documents uncovered in the archives of the Riksbank, Sweden's Central Bank, revealed that it may have received gold stolen by Nazi Germany. The Riksbank documents indicated that between 1939 and 1944, the bank bought 76,040 pounds of gold from Nazi Germany.

01/23/97  The Swiss government endorsed a plan for a memorial fund of $70 million to compensate victims/heirs who claimed dormant assets in Swiss banks.

01/25/97  French Minister Alan Juppé announced the creation of a task force to investigate the whereabouts of funds or property confiscated from Jewish owners by the Nazis or the Vichy regime during World War II.

01/27/97  Switzerland's ambassador to the United States, Carlo Jagmetti, resigned following the disclosure of a confidential strategy paper he wrote in December 1996, urging Switzerland to "wage war" against international criticism that Swiss banks failed to account for missing assets of Holocaust victims and "not to trust most of the adversaries."

01/29/97  Alfred de Fago, Switzerland's general consul in New York, was named Switzerland's ambassador to the United States.

02/02/97  The Dutch Foreign Ministry announced that a commission of historians and financial experts would investigate the whereabouts of 75 tons of gold reserves. According to Dutch and German records, these gold reserves were looted by the Nazis and may still be hidden in Swiss bank accounts or may have been transferred to another neutral nation during the war.

02/06/97  The three major Swiss banks—Crédit Suisse, Swiss Bank Corporation, and the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS)—announced the creation of a special Swiss humanitarian fund for Holocaust victims of 100 million Swiss francs (U.S. $70 million) to benefit victims of the Holocaust.

02/26/97  The Swiss government gave final approval to a Holocaust Memorial Fund (a.k.a. Swiss Humanitarian Fund) planned by the three major Swiss banks for Jewish and non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

02/28/97  Christoph Blocher, chairman of the Swiss chemical company EMS Chemie and a member of Parliament, stated that contributing to a fund for Holocaust survivors "was an admission of guilt" and that "Switzerland had no reason to apologize for doing business with Nazi Germany in order to survive as a neutral country."

03/04/97  President Carlos Menem of Argentina offered Jewish groups full access to its Central Bank archives to investigate whether gold looted by the Nazis was transferred to Argentina via neutral European nations such as Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal. This offer was in response to a written request by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, which also sent letters to Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.
03/05/97 Swiss President Arnold Koller proposed, in a special address to Parliament, the creation of the Swiss Foundation for Solidarity, a humanitarian fund of 7 billion Swiss francs (U.S. $4.7 billion). The Foundation would donate up to SFr 300 million a year to needy recipients in Switzerland and abroad from profits from revaluing SFr 5 million in gold reserves from the Swiss Central Bank. According to President Koller, the beneficiaries would include “victims of poverty and catastrophes, of genocide, and other serious human rights abuses, and for victims of the Holocaust.”

03/06/97 The Swiss Central Bank offered to contribute SFr 70 million to the Holocaust Memorial Fund but it awaits approval from the Swiss Parliament. A federation of Swiss companies also pledged to contribute SFr 46 million to the special humanitarian fund.

03/07/97 Swiss historian Jean François Bergier, the chairman of the Independent Commission of Experts (ICE), announced that the ICE needed more time before issuing its first report to the Swiss government, which was expected by mid-1997.

03/11/97 Elan Steinberg, the executive director of the WJC, announced that the Swedish government had launched an investigation into its wartime dealings with Nazi Germany. The WJC stated that 900 dormant accounts believed to be those of Holocaust victims had been discovered in Swedish banks.

03/12/97 Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti arrived for a 3-day visit to New York and Washington aimed at improving Switzerland’s image after months of criticism. He met with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and then Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat.

03/15/97 The French newspaper, Le Monde, reported that several French banks kept funds deposited by Jewish owners during the war that are today reportedly worth $135 million. Le Monde’s investigation concluded that government bureaucracy and confusion after the war were to blame rather than any intentional policy.

03/18/97 The Simon Wiesenthal Center called for the Swiss government to open its files on François Genoud, a Swiss Nazi who managed funds for the Third Reich and later provided funds for international terrorists. He was believed to have been a German and Swiss agent and was identified by Nazi-hunters as being instrumental in transferring gold from Swiss banks to Latin America via Spain.

03/20/97 The Swiss National Bank confirmed allegations that it had aided other European neutrals (Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey) to buy millions of dollars worth of gold looted by Nazi Germany. According to the study, the National Bank bought 1.7 billion Swiss francs (U.S. $425 million) of gold between 1940 and 1945.

03/31/97 A $7 billion class-action suit was filed in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan by attorney Edward Fagan on behalf of a dozen American plaintiffs against seven of Europe’s largest insurers. The suit accused the insurers of failing to honor policies bought before the war, and in some cases, giving the money to the Nazis. The seven companies named in the lawsuit are: Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A. of Trieste, Italy; Wiener Alliance Versicherungs Aktiengesellschaft of Vienna; A.G.F. Assurances Générale de France Vie of Paris; Riunione Adriatica Di Sicurita S.p.A
Consolidated of Milan; Der Anker Allegemeine Versicherungs AG of Vienna; Bavarian Reinsurance Co. (a.k.a. Bayerische Allegemeine Versicherungs) of Munich; and Allianz Group of Munich.

04/16/97 The Swiss cabinet appointed the president and three members of a board that will run the Humanitarian Fund for Holocaust victims. Rolf Bloch, head of the Swiss Federation of Hebrew Congregations, was named to lead the seven-member board. The other three Swiss appointees are all former local and federal government officials: Rene Bacher, Josi Meier, and Bernard Ziegler.

04/16/97 Portugal’s Central Bank published a statistical breakdown of its wartime gold movements but stressed that it had found no evidence that it was actively involved in laundering gold looted by the Nazis.

05/01/97 The Swiss government appointed Elie Wiesel honorary chairman of the Swiss Humanitarian Fund. He later declined the position in a letter dated May 6 to Swiss Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti. The other two international members are Israeli statesman Yosef Burg and Israeli Knesset member Avraham Hirschson. Edgar Bronfman, head of the WJC, was later named as a replacement for Wiesel.

05/06/97 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee held a hearing on the shredding of Holocaust-era documents. This hearing was printed as Senate Hearing 105-152.

05/06/97 The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office published Nazi Gold: Information from the British Archives, Part II on the fate of gold recovered by the Allies. This was a follow-up to its report of September 1996.

05/07/97 The Historian’s Office of the U.S. Department of State released its report, U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II: Preliminary Study, also known as the “Eizenstat Report.” Presented by William Slany, the chief historian at the State Department, and then Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, this report criticized the Swiss for having been bankers to the Nazis and, thus, accountable for prolonging the war. Greg Bradsher of the National Archives also prepared an appendix Finding Aid to accompany this report.

05/15/97 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee chaired by Senator D’Amato held a hearing on the Eizenstat Report that was broadcast live in Switzerland. This hearing was printed as Senate Hearing 105-176.

05/19/97 Senator D’Amato introduced private legislation (S.768) for the relief of Christoph Meili, his wife, and two children. Meili, a former Swiss security guard at the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), discovered documents relating to pre-World War II dormant accounts that were to be shredded. Meili took the documents and turned them over to Jewish groups. He was fired by the UBS and faced prosecution for violating Swiss banking secrecy laws before fleeing abroad.

05/28/97 Swiss historian Mario Cerruti uncovered a document from 1946 in Swiss diplomatic archives that detailed how Switzerland exported arms and war material to Nazi Germany worth $640 million between 1940 and September 1944.
06/25/97 U.S. House Banking and Financial Services Committee, chaired by Representative James Leach, held a hearing on gold taken from Holocaust victims by Nazi Germany. Among those testifying were Senator D’Amato, Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, and others.

07/07/97 Rolf Bloch, chairman of the Swiss Humanitarian Fund, announced that the Fund would dispense the first payments to needy Holocaust victims in Eastern Europe by October 1997.

07/23/97 The Swiss Banking Association (SBA) printed the names of over 1,870 pre-1945 dormant accounts in major newspapers worldwide and on the Internet.

07/29/97 President Clinton signed S.768, granting legal residency to Christoph Meili and his family. It became Private Law 105-1.

08/01/97 A bipartisan letter signed by 82 U.S. Senators was sent to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, urging his government to pay pensions to Holocaust survivors in the former Soviet Eastern Bloc. Germany had already paid more than $54 billion to Holocaust survivors in Western Europe, but very little to survivors in Eastern Europe.

08/06/97 British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced that an International Conference on Nazi Gold would take place in London, December 2-4, 1997.

08/22/97 Insurance claims by Holocaust survivors and heirs were the focus of a meeting by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) at its fall national meeting in Washington, D.C. A Holocaust Insurance Issues Working Group, headed by Deborah Senn, Washington State Commissioner of Insurance, discussed the class-action lawsuit filed by Holocaust survivors in March 1997 against 16 European insurance companies for unpaid insurance and property/casualty policies.

10/02/97 A study conducted for the WJC concluded that Nazi Germany looted $8.5 billion in gold from 1933-1945 from nations conquered by Germany. One-third of that amount came from individuals and private businesses, while two-thirds came from central banks. According to this study, an estimated $2 million to $3 million from privately owned gold ended up in Swiss banks.

10/29/97 The second list of dormant bank accounts was released by the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA). Included on this list were dormant accounts of non-Swiss citizens opened prior to May 9, 1945, bank accounts by Swiss nationals that had been dormant since the end of World War II, and additional non-Swiss dormant accounts that had been identified since the first list was published in July 1997.

11/05/97 Senator Mike DeWine introduced legislation (S.1379), the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, to amend the National Security Act of 1947 to require disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act regarding Nazi war criminal records and to create a special interagency group to identify, declassify, and make available to the public all Nazi war records held by the U.S. government.
11/13/97 Senator Alfonse D'Amato introduced legislation (S.1564), the Holocaust Victims Redress Act, to provide redress for inadequate restitution of assets seized by the U.S. government during World War II which belonged to victims of the Holocaust. This legislation called for $25 million over the next 3 years and an additional $5 million for archival research. S.1564 was passed by voice vote in the Senate.

11/13/97 A resolution (S.Con.Res.39) sponsored by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan was passed in the Senate. This concurrent resolution expressed “a sense of Congress that the German government should expand and simplify its reparations system, provide reparations to Holocaust survivors in Eastern and Central Europe, and set up a fund to help cover the medical expenses of Holocaust survivors.”

12/02/97 The British Foreign Office hosted the Nazi Gold Conference in London, December 2-4, 1997. Forty-one nations were represented including the U.S. delegation headed by Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. At the Conference, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the establishment of a Fund for Victims of Nazi Persecution at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York that would go to survivors of the Holocaust. On behalf of the United States, Eizenstat pledged $4 million and an additional $25 million over the next 3 years with congressional approval. Argentina, Luxembourg, and others indicated that they would contribute to the fund, while France vowed to establish a separate fund. Criticism at the Nazi Gold Conference was aimed at the Vatican, whose representatives came only as observers. The Vatican is still unwilling to open its wartime archives to international scrutiny. A follow-up conference on the issues of looted art objects and insurance claims was planned for November 30-December 3, 1998, at the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

12/17/97 A class-action suit was filed in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, on behalf of Fernande Bodner and Anna Zajdenberg, two French Jews living in New York, against nine international banks that operated in Vichy France. The banks named in the suit were Crédit Lyonnais, Société Générale, Banque Paribas, Banque National de Paris, Crédit Commercial de France, Crédit Agricole, Banque Française du Commerce Extérieur, Banque Worms Capital Corp., and Barclays Bank of the United Kingdom. The lawsuit alleged that the banks blocked access to Jewish accounts under the Vichy regime, and then after the war failed to account for them.

1998

01/07/98 Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau served a subpoena on the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), ordering it to hold two paintings by 19th century Austrian Expressionist painter Egon Schiele. The two paintings, “Portrait of Wally” and “Dead City,” were part of a traveling exhibition, “Egon Schiele: The Leopold Collection,” from the Leopold Museum in Vienna, Austria. These paintings were claimed by the heirs of Lea Bondi Jaray and Fritz Grünbaum as family property lost during World War II.
01/12/98 The German government announced that it would create a $110 million reparations fund for Jewish survivors of the Holocaust living in countries of the former Eastern Bloc. The first payments were expected to begin in July 1998 and would assist between 18,000-20,000 Jewish survivors.

01/13/98 A report, The Unwanted Guests: Swiss Forced Labor Camps, 1940-1944, by American historian Alan M. Schom, was released by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. According to the report, 62 Swiss slave-labor camps held between 17,000 to 22,000 Jewish men, women, and children, who were required to perform mandatory labor with little or no compensation. Schom’s report stated that 70% of Jewish refugees were held in these camps. Rabbi Marvin Bier, director of the Wiesenthal Center, called for Switzerland to apologize for its treatment of Jewish refugees.

01/14/98 Swiss officials objected to Schom’s report on Swiss labor camps as “insulting and dishonest” and asserted that Jews were treated no differently from other refugees. Ambassador Thomas Borer, head of the Swiss Task Force investigating Switzerland’s role during World War II, decried the allegations as “outrageous” and stated that Jews and gentiles were held equally in “no-frills” labor camps and that they received wages and meals similar to that of Swiss soldiers.

01/27/98 The Holocaust Victims Redress Act, S.1564, passed by voice vote in the House.

01/28/98 Representative Eliot Engel introduced H.R.3121, known as the Holocaust Victims Insurance Act. This legislation would require insurance companies to disclose how many policies they wrote for Holocaust victims and to pay the beneficiaries. Companies failing to report this information would face fines of $1,000 a day. It would also direct the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to produce a registry of Holocaust victims so that names could be checked against policies.

01/31/98 First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton praised Switzerland’s efforts to “uncover the truth about its role in World War II” and its efforts to raise money for Holocaust victims in a speech given in Zurich during a 3-day visit.

02/03/98 Representative Mark Foley introduced H.R.3143, the Comprehensive Holocaust Accountability in Insurance Measure, which would prohibit insurance companies from doing business in the United States unless they disclose any financial dealings they had with Holocaust victims. It would also prohibit insured depository institutions from transacting business with or on behalf of such foreign insurance companies.

02/05/98 Senator D’Amato urged the Federal Reserve to reject the merger of U.S. operations of the Swiss Bank Corp. and the Union Bank of Switzerland. In a letter to Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, D’Amato stated that the two banks “have yet to provide answers to questions regarding their conduct in the disposition of assets of Holocaust victims and their record of collaboration with the Nazis during the war.”
02/12/98 The U.S. House Banking and Financial Services Committee, chaired by Representative James Leach, held a hearing on the legal status of art objects seized by the Nazis and on World War II-era insurance claims by Holocaust survivors and their heirs. Among those testifying were Washington Insurance Commissioner Deborah Senn, Chair of the NAIC Working Group on Holocaust and Insurance Issues; Philippe de Montebello, director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Chuck Quackenbush, California Insurance Commissioner; and Ronald S. Lauder, chairman of the WJC’s art recovery project.

02/13/98 President Clinton signed S.1564, the Holocaust Victims Redress Act, into law as Public Law 105-158.

02/16/98 Two Swiss insurance companies, Winterthur and Baloise Life/Basler Leben, refused to open their archives to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), the American organization that is investigating insurance policies belonging to Holocaust victims. Both claimed that they are private Swiss companies operating under Swiss laws, and therefore not answerable to foreign entities. Elan Steinberg, director of the WJC, responded to their position as “obscene.”

03/01/98 In Cleveland, The Plain Dealer reported that museums in Poland and Ukraine dispute the ownership of 24 drawings by German Renaissance painter Albrecht Durer. They claimed that these works were stolen in 1941 and were later sold on the international art market after World War II. The drawings are currently located at the Cleveland Museum of Art and other museums worldwide, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Courtauld Institute Galleries in London. In 1952, the Cleveland Museum of Art bought two of the drawings for its collection, “The Dead Christ” and “The Ascension.” Museum officials from the Lubomirski Museum in Lvov, Ukraine, and the Ossolinski Library in Wroclaw, Poland, want the drawings returned.

03/03/98 The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to send a resolution to the full Senate to approve the ratification of NATO expansion to include Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Senators Arlen Specter and Robert Torricelli vowed to introduce a resolution that would postpone the vote on NATO enlargement until life insurance claims of Holocaust victims were paid by the successor governments of the three former Communist nations. Edward J. Moskal, president of the Polish American Congress, reacted to this proposed resolution by stating, “The payment of life insurance claims is something that should be investigated and settled, but should not be used, in a malicious way, as a reason for stopping these nations from joining NATO, which is a matter of their security and ours.”

03/04/98 Crédit Suisse Group, a Swiss bank, reached an undisclosed settlement with Estelle Sapir of Queens, New York, in return for her withdrawal from a class action suit filed in October 1996. According to a Swiss television report, the settlement was estimated at $500,000. Ms. Sapir was one of the original litigants in a class action suit that now has more than 10,000 complainants.

03/04/98 A class-action lawsuit was filed in federal court in Newark, New Jersey, against Ford Werke, a German subsidiary of Ford Motor Company. The lawsuit
alleged that Ford Werke, based in Cologne, Germany, made trucks for the German army during World War II and profited from forced civilian laborers from Belgium, Russia, Italy, and Ukraine. The lawsuit named one plaintiff, Elsa Iwanowa of Antwerp, Belgium, who claimed that she was taken from her home in Rostov, Russia, and forced to work in the Cologne factory with 2,000 other children from 1943-1945.

03/05/98 The Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, S. 1379, cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill would allow two classes of U.S. archival material to be released to investigators: war crimes information on Nazi persecutions and information on transactions involving stolen assets from Holocaust victims.

06/02/98 The U.S. Department of State released its second historical report, entitled *U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and Negotiations with Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey on Looted Gold and German External Assets and U.S. Concerns About the Fate of the Wartime Ustasha Treasury*. This report examined Nazi Germany’s trade with neutral countries, which helped fuel the Nazi war machine by providing commercial means of exchanging gold for critical war materials. It also looked at war profiteering by these neutral nations, including the United States, during the first 27 months of the war when it was also a neutral nation.

06/04/98 The U.S. House Banking Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3662, the Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998. This hearing was a continuation of an earlier hearing on the traffic of Nazi gold looted during World War II, the theft of Holocaust victims’ assets, and belated postwar restitution efforts.

06/19/98 Crédit Suisse, Swiss Bank Corp., and Union Bank of Switzerland offered $600 million to settle unclaimed dormant account claims. Their offer was rejected by the WJC and other Jewish groups.


06/29/98 Holocaust survivors sue the Swiss National Bank for allegedly laundering proceeds from looted Nazi gold.

07/15/98 British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced the beneficiaries of the United Kingdom’s £1 million contribution to the “International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution.” One-third would go to the Board of Deputies of British Jews for needy survivors in the United Kingdom; and two-thirds would go to the American Joint Distribution Committee through the World Jewish Restitution Organization for projects providing food and medical care to needy survivors in Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine.

07/22/98 The U.S. Senate Banking Committee chaired by Senator D’Amato held a hearing on the assets of Holocaust victims. Among those testifying were Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs Stuart Eizenstat; Jean Ziegler, a member of the Swiss Parliament and author of *The Swiss, the Gold, and the Dead*; Carl McCall, Comptroller of the State of New York; Israel Singer, Secretary General of the WJC; and others.
Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus formed an international commission to evaluate the crimes committed by the Nazi and Soviet occupation regimes in Lithuania. The 14-member Commission includes historians, human rights specialists, representatives of international Jewish organizations, and lawyers from Lithuania, Russia, the United States, and Germany.

The largest commercial Swiss banks (Crédit Suisse and the Union Bank of Switzerland), Holocaust survivors, and Jewish groups reached a $1.25 billion settlement of wartime assets. This action halted an economic boycott against Swiss banks, institutions, and companies. The $20 billion class action lawsuit in federal district court in Brooklyn brought against these two commercial banks was dropped, as well as a suit in the Northern District in California. (See CRS Report 98-699, Holocaust Survivor and Heir Lawsuits to Recover Swiss Bank Deposits for further details.) This settlement, however, did not resolve a separate lawsuit filed in the Southern District of New York in October 1996 against three major Swiss insurance companies (Crédit Suisse, the Union Bank of Switzerland, and Swiss Bank Corp., also known as the Swiss National Bank).

A "Memorandum of Intent" was signed by five large European insurance companies (Allianz, Generali, Zurich Group, AXA-UAP, and Nordstern), two survivor organizations (the World Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Restitution Organization), and 39 states to establish a process to investigate insurance policies of victims of the Holocaust and to consult with European governments and the insurance industry.

An agreement was reached between Chicago art collector Daniel Searle and the descendants of Dutch victims of the Holocaust, Friedrich and Louise Gutmann, concerning a pastel "Landscape with Smokestacks" by Edgar Degas. Searle will relinquish a half-interest in the painting to the Gutmann heirs and donate his half-interest to the Art Institute of Chicago. The Art Institute will have the work appraised, then buy the other half-interest from the Gutmann heirs. The agreement settled a lawsuit by the Gutmann heirs that was scheduled to go to trial in September 1998.

Assicurazioni Generali, Italy's largest insurance company, agreed to pay $100 million to Holocaust survivors and heirs of Holocaust victims for life insurance policies and annuity policies that it refused to honor after the war. The agreement was presented to Judge Michael Mukasey in U.S. District Court in Manhattan.

A 31-page class action lawsuit was filed in Brooklyn, New York, against 12 German companies including Audi, Daimler-Benz, BMW, Krupp, Leica cameras, Siemens, and Volkswagen by the same lawyers who handled the Swiss banking and insurance cases, Edward Fagan in New York and Michael Witti in Munich. They also filed lawsuits against Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank, as well as the chemical company, Degussa, for using slave laborers and from profiting from the war.

A separate lawsuit was filed in Newark, New Jersey, against Volkswagen only by former slave laborers in their Nazi-run factories.
09/09/98 The Tripartite Gold Commission (TGC) disbanded after 52 years. The TGC was created by the victorious Allied forces of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to return gold seized by Nazi Germany from the central banks of occupied countries. An estimated $60 million to $70 million has been promised by the TGC to the fund, known as the “Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution,” created during the London Nazi Gold Conference in December 1997. Of the original 370 tons of foreign monetary reserves that the Allies recovered in 1945, only $300,000 belonging to the former Yugoslavia remains on deposit in the Bank of England until Yugoslavia’s successor states agree on its distribution. The United States pledged $25 million, Britain $1.7 million, and France $3.45 million to this fund.

09/11/98 Volkswagen announced a $12 million private relief fund to compensate World War II slave laborers. It was the first time a German company acknowledged its “moral and legal responsibility” to compensate Nazi-era slave laborers. The fund will be supervised by a prominent international board, including former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, and will decide how the money will be disbursed.

09/23/98 Following Volkswagen’s lead, Siemens, a German electronics firm, announced a $12 million fund to compensate former slave laborers that were forced to work for the firm by the Nazis during World War II. Siemens estimated that between 10,000 to 20,000 slave laborers worked in its wartime factories.

10/15/98 The Austrian government announced the establishment of a commission of historians to study all aspects of the country’s restitution efforts to victims of the Holocaust. The commission will be funded by Parliament and comprised of six members under the leadership of Clemens Jabloner, President of Austria’s High Administrative Court.

10/15/98 Two Austrian companies (auto engineering firm Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG and steelmaker Voest) and three German firms (construction companies Phillip Holzmann AG, Dyckerhoff AG, and Leonhard-Moll AG) were named in two separate class-action lawsuits in New York. These companies are accused of using and profiteering from slave laborers at their factories during World War II. The lawsuit against the two Austrian firms is the first of its kind targeting Austria’s wartime industry.

10/21/98 The first meeting of the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) was held in New York. Former U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger was appointed chairman of the ICHEIC, and five working groups were established.

11/30-12/3/98 The Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets was hosted by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum to discuss the various issues relating to Holocaust-era assets. Attending were representatives of 44 nations and 13 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who discussed restitution practices and policies relating to insurance claims, looted works of art, and communal property. Guidelines for the restitution of works of art looted by the Nazis were established and known as the “Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art.” Some of the recommendations included: the opening of all records and archives where
information may be found; the identification of looted works of art; creation of a central registry for such information; and a "just and fair" process by which claimants may come forward seeking lost works of art and cultural objects.

12/04/98 A "Symposium on Records and Research Relating to Holocaust-Era Assets" was held at the U.S. National Archives (Archives II) in College Park, Maryland. This symposium was in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, and Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs at the Department of State, gave the opening address. The Symposium examined how the documents located in the National Archives were being used by the U.S. government and private researchers to locate documents pertaining to wartime assets.

For complete detail of all Holocaust-era legislation introduced and passed during the 105th Congress (1997-1998), refer to CRS Report 98-903, Holocaust-Related Legislation of the 105th Congress.

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01/06/99 U.S. Representative Eliot Engels introduced H.R. 126, the Holocaust Victims Insurance Act, a bill to provide for the recovery of insurance issued for victims of the Holocaust. This bill was then referred to the House Committee on Commerce. This was the first bill introduced relating to Holocaust-era assets in the 106th Congress.

01/06/99 U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter introduced H.R.271, Justice for Holocaust Survivors Act. This bill would allow Holocaust survivors who are currently U.S. citizens, but who were not U.S. citizens during the Holocaust and who have been denied reparations by the German government in the past, to sue the German government in the United States to claim restitution for their incarceration in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. This bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

01/11/99 President Clinton announced the creation of a presidential working group to locate, inventory, and quickly make public all classified records held by the United States relating to Nazi war criminals. The Nazi War Criminal Records Interagency Working Group will recommend documents for declassification at the National Archives, according to Executive Order 13110 and Public Law 105-246.

01/19/99 U.S. Representative David McIntosh introduced H.R.390, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received for settlement of certain claims of Holocaust survivors. This bill was then referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

01/19/99 H.R. 126, Holocaust Victims Insurance Act, was referred to the House Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials.

01/26/99 The Contact Bureau on Looted Art opened officially in Bern, Switzerland. Its scope of activity includes processing inquiries which affect the Swiss
collections as well as offering information and support on general questions concerning looted art in Switzerland and research on looted art.

02/16/99 German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder announced the creation of a fund, projected to amount to $3.5 billion to $4.6 billion and financed by 12 German companies, to compensate victims of the Nazis during World War II. The creation of the “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” fund, according to remarks by Chancellor Schroeder, was “to counter lawsuits, particularly class action suits, and to remove the basis of the campaign being led against German industry and our country.” Payments are expected to start by September 1, 1999. The 12 companies contributing to this fund are: Allianz insurance, BASF, Bayer, BMW, Daimler-Chrysler (formerly Daimler-Benz), Degussa, Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, Hoechst, Krupp, Siemens, and Volkswagen. This list of 12 companies includes automakers, banks, chemical production, insurance, and other German industrial sectors accused of profiting from forced/slave labor during World War II.

02/25/99 H.R. 271, Justice for Holocaust Survivors Act, was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims.

03/05/99 Five Holocaust survivors forced to help build a factory for German airplanes during World War II filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court. It is the first lawsuit filed in California seeking compensation for victims of Nazi slave labor. The lawsuit was filed against Philip Holtzman AG, a multibillion-dollar German construction company that does considerable business in the United States.

03/25/99 U.S. Representative Jerry Weller introduced H.R. 1292, a bill to provide that no federal income tax shall be imposed on amounts received by Holocaust victims or their heirs.

03/25/99 Former slave laborers under the Nazis, wearing yellow Stars of David and their old concentration camp numbers, protested outside an IG Farben shareholders’ meeting in Frankfurt, Germany. They were protesting a plan by the German government to establish an industry wide-fund for all those forced to work for the Third Reich. Instead, the plaintiffs in the U.S.-based lawsuits demanded direct payments from the German companies for which they worked during the war and an apology. The German government fund is designed to dismiss the growing number of class action lawsuits against German companies that profited by using slave labor during the war years.

03/27/99 The accounting firm of Coopers & Lybrand requested that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) provide them with genealogical records that could help identify over 300,000 Jewish victims of the Holocaust who may have established bank accounts in Switzerland. Coopers & Lybrand asked for the records to further their work with the Volcker Commission, which is still auditing Swiss bank accounts for unclaimed accounts held by Holocaust victims and heirs.

03/30/99 The U.S. Department of State announced plans to give $4 million to an international relief fund that will assist needy survivors of Nazi persecution with food, medicine, and clothing in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Many of these Holocaust survivors were “double victims” of Nazi Germany and the Soviet
Union. This international relief fund, known as the Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution, was created during the London Nazi Gold Conference in December 1997. Overall, the United States has pledged $25 million over 3 years (P.L. 105-158, sec.103), and 17 other nations have pledged more than $61 million.

03/30/99 The French Banking Association (AFB) announced that the French Foreign Ministry requested that the U.S. District Court for Eastern New York dismiss two lawsuits by Holocaust survivors against French banks in the United States on the grounds that these lawsuits disrupt and interfere with current efforts by the French government to compensate victims of the Holocaust in France. The French banks being pursued by victims in the United States are: Société Générale; Banque Paribas; the French subsidiary of Barclay’s Bank; Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole; the CNCA unit, Crédit Agricole Indosuez; Crédit Lyonnais; Banque National de Paris; Crédit Commercial de France; Banque Française du Commerce Extérieur, and Banque Worms Capital Corp.

03/31/99 A spokesman at the U.S. Department of State said that they would not intervene in U.S. courts on behalf of the French government and would not intervene in any private litigation.

03/31/99 A class action complaint was filed in San Francisco Superior Court by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, California Governor Gray Davis, and representatives of Holocaust survivors who reside in California against German and American companies that used slave labor and “Aryanized” Jewish assets during the Holocaust. The companies named in the lawsuit are Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank, Commerzbank AG, Deutsche Lufthansa, VIAG, Ford Motor Company, and General Motors Corp.

03/31/99 The Swiss Finance Ministry set up a timetable for potential sales of excess Swiss gold reserves. If approved by public referendum in March 2000, a portion of the sale of the surplus gold reserves will be used for the Swiss Solidarity Fund.

03/31/99 The Swiss Foreign Ministry announced that it would disband the Special Task Force on Holocaust Issues created in October 1996 and headed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer. Ambassador Borer led Swiss efforts to deal with international criticism that Switzerland served as a wartime financial center with close commercial ties to Nazi Germany.

04/13/99 U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham introduced S. 779, a bill to provide that no federal income tax shall be imposed on amounts received by Holocaust victims of their heirs.

04/23/99 The Swiss Supreme Court called for an investigation into allegations by Joseph Spring, a Jewish refugee during World War II, whom Swiss border guards handed over to the Nazis in 1943. Mr. Spring currently resides in Australia and is requesting $67,000 in compensation from the Swiss government for being twice turned away at the French-Swiss border, and, on his second attempt, being turned over to the Germans and sent to Auschwitz, where he survived the war. In its decision, the high court ruled against the government, which had said that Spring’s claim had no legal basis.
04/29/99 The French government returned an oil painting by Claude Monet, "Nymphéas, 1904" (Water Lilies, 1904) to the heirs of its French-Jewish owner, Paul Rosenberg. Rosenberg was an art dealer and collector, and in 1940 the Germans confiscated his art collection and sent it to Germany. Although the painting was returned to France in 1949, it was not identified as part of the Rosenberg collection until it appeared in a show, "Monet in the 20th Century," at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in the fall of 1998. French Culture Minister Catherine Trautmann presided over the ceremony and handed the painting back to Rosenberg's daughter-in-law, Elaine, and granddaughter, Elizabeth Clark.

04/30/99 At a conference held at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, California's top officials and legislators led by Governor Gray Davis and Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush announced the formation of the "California Holocaust Insurance Alliance" consisting of 25 organizations and individuals calling for the suspension of 64 insurance companies practicing in California that have failed to honor Holocaust-era claims.

05/05/99 Anne Gazeau-Secret, the French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, announced that the French government acknowledged it had yet to fulfill its pledge from June 1998 to contribute $3.23 million to needy victims of the Holocaust since it needed additional time to consult with Jewish groups in France on how the funds should be distributed.

05/06/99 The Washington Post reported on a government commission in Buenos Aires, the Argentine Committee of Inquiry into Nazi Activities, uncovering evidence in three letters written in the 1950s during the dictatorship of Juan Peron that indicated that the Argentine Central Bank served as a temporary repository for Nazi gold after the fall of the Third Reich.

05/12/99 The U.S. Department of State hosted an international conference of government, business, and private groups on reparations for victims of forced or slave labor by the Nazi regime during World War II. Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs, and Bodo Hombach, chief of staff for German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, presided at the gathering. Foreign delegations from Germany, Belarus, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Israel, Poland, and Russia attended. Also in attendance were officials and lawyers for the 16 German companies that have pledged to set up a fund for these forced/slave laborers by September 1, 1999, the 60th anniversary of the start of World War II. Under Secretary Eizenstat announced the creation of two working groups, one to set eligibility rules for payments from the fund and the other to deal with ways to ensure legal closure for the 16 major German companies involved.

05/15/99 A $3 billion lawsuit was filed in Frankfurt, Germany, on behalf of 22,000 Poles who were forced into Nazi slave labor. The lawsuit was filed against Dresdner Bank for its wartime role in financing Nazi war production.

05/23/99 The Jewish Claims Conference and the World Jewish Congress are opposing a $40 million settlement of a lawsuit against two Austrian banks, Bank Austria and its subsidiary, Creditanstalt. At issue is a proposed agreement by the banks to make
restitution of funds lost by Jewish depositors beginning in 1938, when Austria came under the control of Nazi Germany.

05/31/99 The Volcker Commission announced its completion of a 3-year probe of Holocaust-era assets in Swiss banks. A final report from the commission is expected in September 1999.

06/10/99 Industry representatives of 16 German companies announced the creation of a compensation fund in an effort to settle slave labor lawsuits against the following companies that profited from Nazi-era slave labor: Allianz, BASF, Bayer, BMW, Commerzbank, Daimler Chrysler (settling on behalf of Daimler-Benz), Deutsche Bank, Degussa-Huels, Deutz, Dresdner Bank, Thyssen-Krupp, Hoechst, RAG, Siemens, Volkswagen, and VEBA. Called the “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” fund, it will be administered with the help of the German government and estimated at $1.7 billion. Lump-sum payments would be based on need and on 6-months or longer of slave labor service. Attorneys representing victims in the class action lawsuits against these companies charge that the total fund is inadequate and that 6 months or longer of forced/slave labor was the exception rather than the rule since many laborers lasted barely 3 months under such brutal conditions. The aim of these German companies in setting up this fund is to protect them from any future claims.

06/16/99 The Seattle Museum of Art announced that it is returning a $2-million painting, “Odalisque” (1928) by Henri Matisse, to the heirs of Paul Rosenberg, a prominent Jewish art dealer in Paris, whose collection was confiscated by the Nazis during World War II. This decision was the first by an American art museum to return a work of stolen art after an investigation by the Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP), which discovered that the painting had been stolen from Rosenberg’s storage vault in 1941 and had never been recovered by its original owner.

06/18/99 A group of Polish Holocaust survivors filed a class action lawsuit against Poland in the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, New York. The lawsuit seeks to recover property and assets that were illegally seized by the Nazis during World War II and later by the Polish government after the war.

06/21/99 The U.S. State Department confirmed that the German government wired $18 million to the U.S. Treasury Department for distribution to more than 200 Americans who survived Nazi-run concentration camps during World War II. These recipients were American citizens who, at the time of their incarceration, worked in slave labor camps, or were American soldiers who were prisoners of war and held in recognized concentration camps. The exact number of claimants was not disclosed by the State Department nor the exact amount each claimant would receive.

06/22/99 Melvyn Weiss, a U.S. attorney representing victims of Nazi-era slave labor in one of three class-action lawsuits, expressed doubt that an agreement would be reached by September 1, 1999, on a compensation fund set up by 16 German companies charged with profiting from slave labor during World War II. Weiss met with lawyers representing the 16 companies, German Chancellery Minister Bodo

06/23/99 Representatives from five European insurance companies (Assicurazioni Generali of Italy, Allianz of Germany, AXA of France, Winterthur and Zurich of Switzerland) met in Jerusalem to negotiate a settlement for Holocaust-era claims. These companies are members of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) that is trying to establish procedures on how to identify and pay claims on insurance policies issued to Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

06/30/99 U.S. Representative Rick Lazio introduced H.R.2401, a bill to amend the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 to extend the period by which the final report is due and to authorize additional funding.

07/04/99 The Portuguese newspaper Público reported that the investigative committee appointed by the Portuguese government in June 1998, and headed by former President Mario Soares, had determined that Portugal did not launder gold looted by the Nazi regime, and therefore is not obligated to pay any compensation. The committee was formed after the release of the second historical report by the U.S. Department of State that stated that the fascist regime of Antonio Salazar had received gold estimated between $500 million and $1 billion from Nazi Germany.

07/07/99 The Dutch Welfare Ministry announced that it will pay $10.45 million to 122 victims of Germany's occupation of the Netherlands during World War II as part of its pledge to return gold and other assets looted by the Nazis to victims of the Holocaust. Over 300 individuals and organizations submitted applications between September 1998 and March 1999. Most of the money is being spread among various Jewish groups to settle individual claims except for 5% of the money, which will be set aside for other victims of Nazi persecution in the Netherlands, including homosexuals, Romas (gypsies), and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

07/07/99 Italian insurance company Generali and German insurance giant Allianz approved an initial payment to seven heirs of insured Holocaust victims. These insurance policies were issued by Generali and by Riunione Adriatica, the Italian subsidiary of Germany’s Allianz, prior to the outbreak of World War II. The amount of the payment was not disclosed pending further examination.

Selected Print Sources

Articles (selected newspapers, magazines, and journals)


[While fighting for return of stolen assets, lawyers for Holocaust victims spar over leadership and fees.]


[The Nazis looted an Albrecht Durer masterpiece which ended up at the National Gallery of Art, but where it really belongs is now in dispute.]


Henry, Marilyn. Switzerland, Swiss Banks, and the Second World War: The Story Behind the Story. The American Jewish Committee. [*International Perspectives* 38], 1997: 1-42. LRS97-3032

——. A Nazi-Era Bill Finally Comes Due. *Newsweek*, February 1999: 40. [Survivors of World War II-era slave labor camps file lawsuits against companies that profited from their work.]


Sage, Thomas A. Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Legal and Moral Juxtaposition of Switzerland's Bank Secrecy Laws as Illustrated by the


Books


[This work was later republished in London in 1996 under a new title, *Stolen Treasure: The Hunt for the World's Lost Masterpieces*.]


[First published in the United Kingdom as *Blood Money* in 1996.]


[First published in France as *Le Musée Disparu* in 1995.]


CRS Reports


Government Documents (including selected foreign documents)


D810.C8 B73 1997


D810.C8 S53 1997


D804.19.U6 1999

**Independent Reports and Studies**


*Historic report of the German Reichsbank by the German Federal Archives in Berlin. This report details the infamous “Melmer Gold”—gold and jewelry stolen from victims in Auschwitz and other death camps. It discusses 26 secret files recently uncovered chronicling receipt of gold stolen from Jews in concentration camps. In German only.*


Selected Internet Sources

**Art Loss Register** at: [http://www.artloss.com/intro.htm]. The Art Loss register is "the largest private database of stolen and missing works of art, antiques, and valuables worldwide" with offices in London, New York, and Dusseldorf and has Web links to auction houses such as Sotheby and Christie's. Their objective is to assist law enforcement agencies in the process of identifying and recovering stolen works of art. Click on “Holocaust Losses” to find information on how Holocaust victims may locate missing or stolen property.

**Art Newspaper** at: [http://www.theartnewspaper.com/]. Click on “For the Record” at the contents page for “The Art Trade under the Nazis: the not so secret list” from January 1999 issue of *The Art Newspaper*. It has the complete list of names in the 1946 Office of Strategic Services (OSS) report on the art trade under the Nazis. The World Jewish Congress “revealed” its existence in November 1998, although art historians and scholars had known about the list for years. The art dealers are listed by the following countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Luxembourg.


**Britain in the USA** at: [http://www.britain-info.org/just Они nazigold/events.stm]. This Web page on Nazi Gold has links to the FCO, news conferences, transcript of the final report of the Nazi Gold Conference, information on the International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution, and a link to the Enemy Property Web site.

**Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C.** at: [http://www.cmht.com/]. This is the Web site of the Washington, D.C.-based law firm that successfully sued the two largest Swiss banks and reached a $1.25 billion settlement in August 1998. The site provides access to information on pending litigation regarding slave laborers in Nazi-run factories and concentration camps, and a combined questionnaire for the Swiss banks’ settlement, and pending German, Austrian, and French banks’ litigation.
Commission for Art Recovery at: [http://www.wjc-artrecovery.org/]. This is the Web site for the Commission for Art Recovery of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and affiliated with the World Jewish Restitution Organizations (WJRO). This Web site has information on their efforts to locate and identify looted works of art and their cooperation with other organizations such as the Art Loss Register and HARP. Information about members of the commission and how to file a claim is provided.

Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP) at [http://www.lostart.org/index.htm]. This Web site is maintained by HARP and the Washington, D.C.-based National Jewish Museum as a clearinghouse for research and documentation of “Jewish cultural losses suffered between 1933 and 1945.” Included is information on their research database, projects, publications, recent news articles/press, and highlights from their conference on September 4, 1997.

International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) at: [http://www.ICHEIC.org/]. This Web site is the Home Page of the ICHEIC headed by Lawrence S. Eagleburger and includes information on processing a claim, text of meetings, list of participating insurance commissioners, legislation, text of the Memorandum of Understanding, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

National Archives Records and Administration (NARA) at: [http://www.nara.gov/research/assets/]. Holocaust-Era Assets Records and Research at the NARA Web site lists findings aids to primary documents at the Archives, declassified documents, text of research and symposium papers, and a current bibliography. This Web site also provides information on events such as the NARA symposium, “Records and Research Relating to Holocaust-Era Assets” held on December 4, 1998, in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, November 30-December 3, 1998. Full texts of papers presented at the symposium and Web links to scholarly work on researching looted art and insurance claims is provided.

National Association Insurance Commission (NAIC) Working Group on Holocaust and Insurance Issues at: [http://www.naic.org/]. Click on “news releases” and search “Holocaust and claims” at this Web site. The NAIC Web site lists the meetings and related activities by the NAIC on World War II-era life insurance policies of Holocaust victims and their heirs.

Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles at: [http://www.wiesenthal.com/]. At this Web site, click on “Holocaust Assets” for information on British, French, and Swiss banks, and insurance accounts as well as the Center’s response to the recovery of looted Nazi gold at: [http://www.wiesenthal.com/response/v19n3nazigold.html].

Swiss Dormant Accounts at: [http://www.dormantaccounts.ch/]. This Web site is maintained by the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA) and contains the lists of names of dormant account holders from July 23, 1997, and October 29, 1997, and directions on how to file a claim and locate contact information in the United States and abroad.

Swiss Embassy at: [http://www.swissemb.org/press/html/topic_ww_ii.html]. This Web page, Topic Switzerland & World War II, is maintained by the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington, D.C., and provides official links to Swiss government
sources like the Swiss Federal Archives, Swiss Federal Assembly, Unclaimed Assets—Registration Office 1962-1999, and additional links to other international sources.


Swiss Solidarity Foundation (a.k.a. Swiss Foundation for Solidarity) at: [http://www.admin.ch/solidarity/index.htm]. In March 1997, Swiss President Arnold Koller advanced the idea of creating a long-term Solidarity Foundation for humanitarian aid at home and abroad. This undertaking, endorsed by the President of the Swiss National Bank (SNB), would be aimed at offering a dignified future to real or potential victims of poverty, hardship, and violence, and would include aid to victims of the Holocaust. The Foundation would support long-term projects, finance emergency aid, award a Solidarity Prize. Its work would be financed from the proceeds of currently uninvested gold reserves of the National Bank. This financing aspect of the Foundation is scheduled for public referendum in March 2000. This Web site also provides information on its goals and objectives and current news articles on the Foundation.

Swiss Special Task Force at: [http://www.eda-tf.ethz.ch/]. Created by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in October 1996 in response to the controversy regarding Switzerland’s role during World War II, it was headed by Special Ambassador Thomas Borer. The Task Force officially disbanded on March 31, 1999. This Web site has links to additional Swiss government sources including the Bergier Commission Interim Report, May 1998, and Assets in Switzerland of Victims of Nazism and the Compensation Agreements with East Bloc Countries by Peter Hug and Marc Perrenoud, 13 December 1996 - 13 January 1997, at: [http://www.switzerland.taskforce.ch/W/TF/1_ei.htm].

Switzerland & Holocaust Assets at [http://www.giussani.com/holocaust-assets/]. Maintained by a Swiss journalist, Bruno Giussani, this Web site is a “one-stop independent resource monitoring the controversy.” It has a running chronology of current events, selected electronic publications, and Web links to Swiss, American, British, and other sources worldwide on Switzerland and Holocaust-era assets.

U.S. Department of State Holocaust Assets Home Page at: [http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/holocausthp.html]. This Web site offers official remarks, testimony, briefings, press releases, fact sheets, and highlights from the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets (November 30-December 3, 1998). It also has electronic versions of the two reports: Preliminary Study on U.S. and Allied Efforts To Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II (Includes Finding Aids to Records at the National Archives), May 1997; and U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and

U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (Holocaust Victims' Assets) at: [http://www.ushmm.org/assets/index.html]. This Web site contains an International List of Current Activities Regarding Holocaust-era Assets and is a project of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in conjunction with the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets (November 30-December 3, 1998). It allows searching by types of assets (dormant bank accounts, insurance, gold, art, etc.) and by country, government, and private attempts to trace Holocaust assets. A list of archival resources is provided along with a list of U.S. activities regarding Holocaust-era assets. Information for Holocaust survivors and others seeking reparations is included along with information on the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research. The Proceedings from the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets is available full text and Web links to the National Archives, the U.S. Department of State, and other related Web sources are also provided.


U.S. House International Relations Committee (HIRC) at: [http://www.house.gov/international_relations/]. Click on “press releases” for the 105th Congress for a listing of the HIRC activities regarding Holocaust-era assets. Also under “Meetings and Hearings,” click on “105th Congress, second session” for a transcript of the full committee hearing, “Heirless Property Issues of the Holocaust” on August 6, 1998.

U.S. Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee at: [http://www.senate.gov/-banking] for committee hearings and press releases.

World Jewish Congress (WJC) at [http://www.virtual.co.il/orgs/orgs/wjc/]. At the Home Page, click on “Policy Dispatches” for full text of the following:
  - Dispatch No. 27, “Insurers Face the Past: Another Component of the European Jewish Legacy is Reclaimed,” April 1998.

Click on “Policy Studies” index for full text of the following:
  - Sweden and the Shoah: The Untold Chapters, by Sven Fredrik Hedin and Goran Elgemyr.
  - Movements of Nazi Gold: Uncovering the Trail by Sidney Zabludoff.
- *The Fate of Stolen Jewish Properties: The Cases of Austria and the Netherlands*, by Itamar Levine.
Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers

Listed below are the addresses, fax, and telephone numbers (including e-mail and Internet sites when available) of private and governmental organizations that are currently assisting with claims, compensation, and restitution of Holocaust-era assets (works of art, dormant bank accounts, unpaid insurance claims, property, etc.).

**Allianz Insurance Group**—There is no address listed but they do provide a 24-hour, multi-lingual help line for claimants seeking recovery of payments from property, casualty, and life insurance policies from this German company at 1-800-411-0118.

**American Jewish Committee Research Department** (regarding restitution of Jewish property in Central and Eastern Europe):

American Jewish Committee Research Department
165 East 56th Street
New York, NY 10022-2746

Telephone: 212-751-4000

**American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC)** for restitution for needy Holocaust victims in the United States who resided in the former Eastern Bloc during and after World War II from the “International Fund for Needy Victims of Nazi Persecution.” This fund was created by the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and other nations during the London Nazi Gold Conference, December 1997. For claims in the United States contact:

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
711 3rd Avenue
New York, NY 10017-4014

Telephone: (212) 687-6200
Fax: (212) 682-7262
E-mail: info@jdcny.org

**Argentina — Commission of Enquiry into the Activities of Nazism in Argentina (CEANA)** [in Spanish, Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de Las Actividades del Nazismo en la República Argentina (CEANA)]. An international panel of 17 members and 10 research units was created by President Carlos Menem on May 6, 1997, to investigate Argentina’s role in aiding escaped Nazi criminals, the transfer of looted Nazi treasures, and other wartime dealings with the Third Reich. All final reports from the 10 research units are expected by the end of June 1999. Contact them at:

Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de las Actividades del Nazismo en la República Argentina (CEANA)
Reconquista 1088
1023 Capital Federal
ATTN: Guido Di Tella, President (Foreign Minister of Argentina)
Internet at: [http://www.ceana.org.ar].
Art Loss Register (regarding stolen or missing works of art) contact:
The Art Loss Register
666 Fifth Avenue, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10103

Telephone: (212) 262-4831
Fax: (212) 262-4838
E-mail: alrnewyork@aol.com

Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A. (Italy's Largest insurance company) for application
forms to file insurance claims or to request an archival research contact them at:

Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.
Policy Information Center
45 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 200
New York, NY 10111-0100

Telephone: 1-800-456-8174

Austrian National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism
Thus far, a total of 23,296 persons in 65 countries have received assistance through
the fund. For more information, contact:

Austrian National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism
c/o Austrian Press and Information Service
3524 International Court, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-3027

Tel: (202) 895-6775
Fax: (202) 895-6772
E-mail: austroinfo@austria.org
Internet at: [http://www.austria.org/]

(British Government) Enemy Property Payment Scheme
During World War II, the British government confiscated property in the United
Kingdom belonging to residents of countries that were at war with Britain and her
allies. Unfortunately, some of the property confiscated belonged to victims of the
Holocaust and was not returned to the rightful owners after the war. Information on
filing a claim can be obtained from the Panel Secretariat at:

The Enemy Property Claims Assessment Panel
Bay 116-118
10 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0NN
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 171 215 3485
Fax: +44 171 215 3487
E-mail address: property.enemy@frmd.dti.gov.uk
Internet at: [http://www.enemyproperty.gov.uk].
California Holocaust Insurance Settlement Alliance contact:
California Department of Insurance
Attn: Leslie Tick or Risa Salat-Kolm
California Department of Insurance
45 Fremont Street, 23rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Telephone: 1-888-234-4636
Internet at: [www.insurance.ca.gov].

Claims for Jewish Slave-Labour Compensation
This association represents Jewish ghetto and concentration camp survivors who, during the Holocaust, were forcibly used by the Third Reich and German firms as slave labor in Germany and other nations occupied by the Nazis during World War II. Contact information in the United States is currently unavailable.

Claims for Jewish Slave-Labour Compensation
6 Poole Road
Woking, Surrey
GU21 1DY, United Kingdom

Telephone: 01483 751541
Fax: 01483 771137

Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll — two law offices in Washington D.C., and Seattle, Washington. For information on the $1.25 million lawsuit against Swiss banks on dormant war-era bank accounts and pending litigation on World War II-era slave laborers contact:

Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C.
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 500, West Tower
Washington, D.C. 20005

Telephone: (202) 408-4600
Fax: (202) 408-4699
E-mail at lawinfo@cmht.com
Internet at: [http://www.cmht.com/].
Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll, P.L.L.C.
999 Third Avenue, Suite 3600
Seattle, Washington 98104

Telephone: (206) 521-0080
Fax: (206) 521-0166

Commission for Art Recovery for a copy of a claim form and instructions contact:
Commission for Art Recovery
767 Fifth Avenue, Suite 4600
New York, NY 10153
Telephone: (212) 521-0102
Fax: (212) 319-8681
E-mail: claims@rslmgmt.com
Internet at: [http://www.wjc-artrecovery.org/].

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Treasury Department**
Anyone from the state of Pennsylvania with reason to believe that assets deposited in Swiss banks between January 1, 1933, and May 9, 1945, belonging to them or a relative to which they are an heir are urged to contact this office. Also, persons with claims on insurance policies issued by a European insurance company prior to and during World War II should contact this office as well. Unfortunately, no address is currently available.

Telephone: 1-800-379-3999
Internet at: [http://www.treasury.state.pa.us/DefaultASearch.html].

**Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc. (a.k.a “Claims Conference”) in the United States:**

Mr. Gideon Taylor, Executive Director
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc.
15 East 26th Street, Suite 906
New York, NY 10010

Telephone: (212) 696-4944
Fax: (212) 679-2126
E-mail: claimscon@aol.com

**Dormant Swiss Bank Accounts**—for information in the United States contact:
Ernst & Young, LLP
“Dormant Accounts”
P.O. Box 1880 Radio City Station
New York, NY 10101-1880

Telephone: 1-800-662-7708

**Embassy of Switzerland**
2900 Cathedral Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Telephone: (202) 745-7900
Fax: (202) 387-2564
Internet at: [http://www.swissemb.org/].

**German) Article 2 Fund**
This fund was created to compensate Jewish victims in the former East Germany after the reunification of Germany. This decision was formalized in Article 2 of the “Agreement on the Enactment and Interpretation of the Unification Treaty” of September 18, 1990, that unified Germany. Applications for compensation under the Article 2 Fund are still being accepted. Jewish victims of Nazi persecution are eligible
if they: 1) were 6 months or longer in a concentration camp or 18 months or longer in a ghetto or 18 months or longer in hiding; and 2) received no more than DM 10,000 in previous compensation; and 3) currently live under difficult financial circumstances. If eligible, compensation is a lifetime pension in the amount of DM 500 per month. Interested parties should request an application from:

Article 2 Fund
Claims Conference
15 East 26th Street, Room 906
New York, NY 10010

(German) Hardship Fund
Applications for compensation under the Hardship Fund are still being accepted. Compensation is available to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution who have received no previous compensation and currently live under difficult financial conditions. Compensation under the Hardship Fund consists of a one-time payment of DM 5000. Contact the following:

Hardship Fund
Claims Conference
15 East 26th Street, Room 906
New York, NY 10010

Holocaust Art Restitution Project (HARP) at:
National Jewish Museum/HARP
1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-3278

Telephone: (202) 857-6583

Holocaust Claims Processing Office, New York State Banking Department at:
New York State Banking Department
Holocaust Claims Processing Office
2 Rector Street
New York, NY 10006

Telephone: 1-800-695-3318 (in the U.S.); 212-618-6983 (outside the U.S.)
Fax: (212) 618-6908
E-mail address: claimsques@banking.state.ny.us
Internet at: [http://claims.state.ny.us].

International Commission on Holocaust Insurance Claims (ICHEIC). For World War II-era insurance claims, contact the address and telephone number listed below. Please note: Residents of California, Florida, New York, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania should also contact their state insurance commissioners for further updates.

International Commission on Holocaust Insurance Claims
1300 L Street, N.W., Suite 1150
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 289-4100  
Fax: (202) 289-4101  
Internet at: [http://www.ICHEIC.org].

National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) contact:  
National Association of Insurance Commissioners  
444 North Capitol Street, Suite 701  
Washington, D.C. 20001-1512  
Telephone: (202) 624-7790  
Fax: (202) 624-8579  
E-mail address: mhennosy@naic.org  
Internet at: [http://www.naic.org].

Norwegian Compensation Fund established by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice for persons who suffered anti-Jewish measures in Norway during World War II. Deadline for applications is November 1, 1999. Application forms are available from:

Civil Department of the Ministry of Justice  
P.O. Box 8005 Dep  
0030 Olso, Norway  
Telephone: +47 22 24 54 51  
Fax: +47 22 24 27 22  
Internet at: [http://odin.dep.no/repub/97-98/stprp/82/engelsk/].

Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States  
A non-partisan commission of 21 members established by Public Law 105-186, "to conduct a thorough study and develop a historical record of any assets obtained from Holocaust victims that came in possession or control of the United States government." The commission will submit reports and recommendations to the President of the United States for further administrative or legislative action. They can be contacted at:

Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States  
Coordinator: Stu Loeser  
901 15th Street N.W.  
Suite 350  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Telephone: (202) 435-8126

Swiss Bankers Association (SBA)  
Box 4182  
4002 Basle, Switzerland

Telephone: +41 (0) 61 295-9393  
Fax: +41 (0) 272-5382  
Internet at: [http://www.dormantaccounts.ch].
Swiss Bureau on Looted Art contact:
Dr. Andrea F.G. Raschér, J.D.
Contact Bureau on Looted Art
Federal Office of Culture
Hallwylstr. 15, CH-3003 Berne
Switzerland

Tel. +41 31 322 03 25
Fax +41 31 322 92 73
E-mail: andrea.rascher@bak.admin.ch

Swiss Holocaust Task Force (officially disbanded on March 31, 1999)
EDA
3003 Berne, Switzerland

Telephone: +41 (0) 31 323-0486
Fax: +41 (0) 31 323-0839
Internet at [http://www.switzerland.taskforce.ch/].

Swiss Special Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoah
In the United States, contact the Application Processing Center 1-800-549-6864. This
fund was created in February 1997 by the Swiss Federal Council to assist needy victims
in the United States, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Since August
1998, needy victims of the Holocaust in the United States have been able to apply for
support; it usually takes 3 months to process claims.

Swiss Special Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust/Shoah
Waaghausgasse 18
3003 Berne, Switzerland

Telephone: ++41 (0) 31 325-1239
Fax: ++41 (0) 31 323-2300

United Restitution Organization provides legal assistance for individuals in claims
against Germany, for a nominal fee. Contact them at:

United Restitution Organization
570 7th Avenue
Suite 1106
New York, NY 10018

Telephone: (212) 921-3860
Fax: (212) 575-1918

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024
The World Jewish Congress (WJC), American Section
501 Madison Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10022-5602

Telephone: (212) 755-5770
Fax: (212) 755-5883
Internet at: [http://www.virtual.co.il/orgs/orgs/wjc/].

The World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO) is headquartered in Israel:
Mr. Eliyahu Spanic, Director General
World Jewish Restitution Organization
Radak 7, Jerusalem 92301, Israel

Telephone: (972-2) 561-2497/8
Fax: (972-2) 561-2496
Internet at: [http://ja-wzo.org.il/wjro/whoweare.html].
Transmittal

May 21, 1996

TO: Hon. Alfonse M. D'Amato

ATTN: Greg Rickman

FROM: Marilyn L. Nelson, Senior Research Librarian
Congressional Reference Division
TEL: 77542

RE: Locations of institutions that have the papers of Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Laughlin Currie and Sam Klaus

The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections Index to Personal Names, the Research Library Information Network and the Library of Congress holdings were checked for the papers of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Laughlin Currie and Sam Klaus. The Library of Congress and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library have the papers of Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Enclosed is the information on these collections. Unfortunately, we could not identify any institutions having the papers of Laughlin Currie or Sam Klaus. Please call if there are any further questions.
The papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr. (1856-1946), financier, diplomat, and philanthropist, were given to the Library of Congress by Mr. Morgenthau in 1942. Small additions to the papers were made by Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Mrs. Maude Phelps McVeigh Hutchins in 1952 and 1953.

In 1952 the literary rights in the unpublished papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress were dedicated to the public.

A microfilm edition of these papers on 41 reels is available from the Library's Photoduplication Service for purchase subject to the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.). This microfilm edition may also be requested on interlibrary loan through the Library's Loan Division. Ten reels may be borrowed at a time for a loan period of one month.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 23.8
Approximate number of items: ~30,000
A GUIDE TO MANUSCRIPTS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES

Compiled and Edited by
Dennis A. Burton
James B. Rhoads
Raymond W. Smock

Research Materials Corporation
College Park, Maryland
Morgan, Gerald Demuth, 1908-1976.
Oral history interview. 182 pages.
Special assistant in the White House (1953);
administrative assistant to the President
(1953-55); special counsel to the President
(1955-58); deputy assistant to the President
(1958-61).
[Furnished to the library by agreement with
Columbia University.]
Written permission of interviewee required.

Papers, 1866-1953. 510 ft.
Government official.
Correspondence, diaries, memoranda,
telegrams, cablegrams, reports, statistical
data, transcripts of press conferences, file of
articles and speeches, sound recordings,
photos, press releases, scrapbooks, and
newspaper clippings relating to Morgenthau's
career as New York State Conservation
Commissioner; chairman of the Federal Farm
Board, and Under Secretary and Secretary of the
Treasury (1934-45). Includes the "Morgenthau
diaries" (833 bound volumes containing
transcripts of interviews, conversations,
conferences and thoughts, departmental
correspondence and communications); and
correspondence (1866-1941) of Henry Morgenthau,
Sr., with material on his service as ambassador
to Turkey (1913-16). Correspondents include
Bernard M. Baruch, Frederic A. Delano, Marriner
S. Eccles, James A. Farley, Herbert Feis, John
N. Garner, Carter Glass, William Hassett, Harry
Hopkins, Louis McHenry Howe, Robert H. Jackson,
Jesse Jones, Fiorello La Guardia, Herbert
Lehman, Douglas MacArthur, Marvin McIntyre,
William H. McReynolds, John Mack, George Peek,
Frances Perkins, Donald Richberg, Josephine
Roche, Eleanor Roosevelt, Franklin D.
Roosevelt, Samuel I. Rosenman, Nathan Straus,
Arthur Sulzberger, Harry S. Truman, Frank C.
Walker, and Henry A. Wallace.
Unpublished finding aid available at the
library.
Some papers are closed to researchers.
NUCMC 65-54.

Morgenthau, Henry, III.
Papers, 1960-62. 2 ft.
Television producer.
Papers relating to television series,
"Eleanor Roosevelt: Prospects of Mankind."
Unprocessed.

Morgenthau, Henry, III.
Interview primarily concerning Eleanor
Roosevelt including her attitudes toward
people, her relationship with Elinor
Morgenthau, the contrast between her idealism
Research Collections in American Politics
William E. Leuchtenburg, General Editor.

The Morgenthau Diaries, 1933-1945
Description of Collection

Henry Morgenthau Jr. could have earned his place in history solely as an effective secretary of the treasury through virtually all of Franklin Roosevelt's administrations. But neither man felt inhibited by job descriptions. Roosevelt frequently called upon the loyal Morgenthau for important special assignments, both domestic and in the international arena.

In 1933, for example, he was heading the Farm Credit Administration and also negotiating grain sales to the Soviet Union looking toward diplomatic recognition. In 1944, besides heading the Treasury Department, he was a leading member of the War Refugee Board and author of a highly controversial plan for postwar Germany.

These meticulously prepared daily diaries reflect Morgenthau's wide and varied interests: domestic and international economics; government's responsibility to its citizens; social reform; preparations for war; and refugees and displaced persons, particularly the European Jews.

The diaries also shed light on President Roosevelt's decision-making process, and detail Roosevelt's commitment of American resources to the prosecution of World War II and postwar planning. For researchers interested in economics, social reform, political history, presidential studies, Jewish studies, and military history, these diaries are invaluable resources.

The collection is divided into three chronological parts to be published over a three-year period. The previously filmed UPA title, The Presidential Diaries of Henry Morgenthau, Jr. (1938-1945), is more than 95 percent different in content.

Always, but in the later years especially, a large number of associated records were kept with the diaries, normally documents referred to in their pages. There are 865 diary volumes, each separately paged and fronted with a secretary's subject index.

Depression and New Deal, 1933-1939

Fresh from Albany, New York, where he had served as Governor Roosevelt's commissioner of conservation and adviser on agricultural problems, Morgenthau entered the first hundred days of the New Deal determined to restore
hope to the nation's farmers. His diaries document his leadership of the transition from Hoover's Federal Farm Board to the Farm Credit Administration, which, with new legislation and new loans, saved thousands of farms from foreclosure while often also saving the institutions that held farm mortgages.

Before the year 1933 was out, Morgenthau had responded successfully to Roosevelt's call for him to open negotiations with the Soviets for major grain sales, providing both farm income and a prelude to diplomatic recognition. By using Morgenthau to initiate discussions with the Soviets, Roosevelt was able to bypass State Department officials who opposed recognition. The diaries show Morgenthau here and in other instances as a major agent through which Roosevelt operated outside established channels.

The diaries also document a largely ineffective effort by Roosevelt to raise commodity prices indirectly through gold purchases.

In January 1934 Morgenthau was named secretary of the treasury, succeeding the ailing William Woodin. Morgenthau's loyalty to Roosevelt had been decisive in his selection, and he remained a trusted partisan of New Deal programs. His diaries show his role as an advocate of steeply progressive income taxes. Yet he maintained a relatively conservative reputation for his fear of uncontrolled inflation and his hostility to the influence of John Maynard Keynes's countercyclical spending policies.

**Prelude to War and War, 1940-1942**

Morgenthau was an early and ardent antifascist who looked for ways to thwart German and Japanese ambitions as early as 1936 (the Tripartite Stabilization Pact) and to supply the Allies with modern aircraft and other materiel once the war had started. The diaries show him reaching beyond his own department for the means to further the cause, often jousting with the State Department, Navy (until Frank Knox arrived), and War (until Henry L. Stimson arrived).

In 1941 Morgenthau shared in the drafting of the Lend-Lease Act. He mounted the defense bond campaigns to restrain inflation and strengthen morale. He advocated larger tax increases than Congress was willing to enact. And, personally moved by the plight of Europe's Jews, he began early to push for refugee aid.

In these and later years Morgenthau frequently augmented his diary entries with supporting documents: speeches, press releases, draft documents, reports, meeting agenda and minutes, transcripts or notes of telephone and informal conversations, topical reports, and correspondence and memoranda with the President and other Washington power centers.

**World War II and Postwar Planning, 1943-1945**

This portion of the Morgenthau diaries covers his most enduring achievement and his most public embarrassment, both related to postwar planning. The diaries document the Bretton Woods Conference, where he convened central bank heads of the major Allied powers to agree on establishing the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, key institutions in financing the postwar reconstruction effort.

It was the Morgenthau Plan for a postwar Germany, also documented in this section, that proved a major embarrassment. Tentatively approved by Roosevelt and Churchill in September 1944, the plan called for "converting Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in character," in the words of their communiqué. The plan's vindictiveness and impracticality made Morgenthau a political liability in an election year, and Roosevelt soon disowned the idea, though not its author. It also had repercussions abroad as the astute propagandist Joseph Goebbels exploited its threat in order to stiffen German resistance.

This part also covers the startup of the War Refugee Board, which Morgenthau helped create and would chair. Longstanding refugee problems were to be aggravated immensely by the displaced populations in the newly liberated
Morgenthau stayed on at Treasury until after the death of his friend and mentor in the White House. His resignation in July 1945 made a place for Truman's protégé Fred Vinson. Only 54, Morgenthau gave up the diary-keeping with the office and returned to New York.

Source note:
The documents reproduced in this publication are donated historical materials from Henry Morgenthau Jr. in the custody of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. The microfilm of the Morgenthau diaries is in the public domain.

Ordering Information

Depression and New Deal, 1933-1939
35mm microfilm (63 reels) with printed guide.

Prelude to War and War, 1940-1942
35mm microfilm (114 reels) with printed guide.

World War II and Postwar Planning, 1943-1945
35mm microfilm (73 reels) with printed guide.

Discounts:
Option A. Save 20%: The complete 3-part collection with printed guides on standing order, paid on one invoice now: $21,440.

Option B: Save 10%: The complete 3-part collection with printed guides on standing order, invoiced as published: $24,125. Libraries will be invoiced $6,080 for the first part in 1995, $11,000 for the second part in 1996, and $7,045 for the third part in 1997.

Availability: UPA is publishing the first microfilm part in summer 1995, the second in spring 1996, and the third in spring 1997. Please inquire for the availability of printed guides for each part.
Date: 5/21/96

FACSIMILE COVER PAGE

TO

Name: Greg Rickman
Location: Senate

Telephone Number: ( ) FAX Equipment Number: ( ) 4-5871

FROM

Name: Mary Wolfskill
Location: MANUSCRIPT DIVISION, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Telephone Number: ( ) 7-5387 FAX Equipment Number: (202) 707-6336

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Message (if any): Morgenthau, guide

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The Papers of

HENRY MORGENTHAU

The papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr. (1856-1946), financier, diplomat, and philanthropist, were given to the Library of Congress by Mr. Morgenthau in 1942. Small additions to the papers were made by Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Mrs. Maude Phelps McVeigh Hutchins in 1952 and 1953.

In 1952 the literary rights in the unpublished papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress were dedicated to the public.

A microfilm edition of these papers on 41 reels is available from the Library's Photoduplication Service for purchase subject to the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.). This microfilm edition may also be requested on interlibrary loan through the Library's Loan Division. Ten reels may be borrowed at a time for a loan period of one month.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 23.8
Approximate number of items: 30,000
Biographical Note

1856, Apr. 26
Born, Mannheim, Germany

1866
Immigrated to the United States

1871-77
Studied at City College of New York and Columbia Law School

1877
Entered law practice

1883
Married Josephine Sykes

1899
Left law to found Central Realty Bond and Trust Co.

1905
Began Henry Morgenthau Co.

1911
Helped form Committee of Safety in New York City to promote better industrial conditions
Founded Bronx House with his wife Josephine and Lillian Wald

1912
Finance chairman of Democratic National Committee

1913-16
Ambassador to Turkey

1916
Returned to the United States to aid President Woodrow Wilson's election campaign

1919
Attended Paris Peace Conference
Chairman of Commission to investigate anti-Semitism in Poland
Delegate to founding conference of International Red Cross
Toured country on behalf of League To Enforce Peace

1920
Appointed but not confirmed as Ambassador to Mexico

1923
Chairman of League of Nations Resettlement Commission for Greece

1933
Technical delegate to World Monetary and Economic Conference in London

1946, Nov. 25
Died, New York City
Scope and Content Note

The papers of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., span the years 1795 to 1941, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period 1870-1941. The collection consists of original or transcribed diaries, family papers, general correspondence and letterbooks, special correspondence, speeches and writings, a subject file, and miscellaneous clippings, printed matter, historical collectibles, and other materials.

Henry Morgenthau, Sr., who immigrated to the United States from Mannheim, Germany, in 1866, was a businessman, diplomat, and philanthropist whose service as American Ambassador to Turkey during World War I brought him center stage to Middle Eastern affairs and the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. Sent to Constantinople by President Wilson in 1913, he held the ambassadorship through the first two years of war and the beginning of the last fatal round of Armenian massacres. His adroit handling of both these crises drew widespread praise. He came swiftly to the aid of imprisoned or harassed Allied personnel after Turkey sided with the Central Powers, and then, on being informed of the desperate plight of the Armenians, whom the Turkish government aimed systematically to deport or destroy, he took the initiative to notify Washington and the world of their need for help. Earlier it had been Morgenthau's alert response in securing $50,000 from the American Jewish Committee in New York which saved the lives of many Jewish settlers in Palestine. At the Paris peace negotiations in 1919 Morgenthau acted as technical consultant on Turkish affairs. He joined in the formation of the Armenian Relief Committee, a charitable organization which preceded Near East Relief, and after the war he received from President Wilson an appointment to become chairman of a special commission to investigate the persecution of Jews in Poland. His crowning philanthropic achievement was the massive resettlement under League of Nations auspices of more than one million Greeks exiled from Turkey after the Greco-Turkish War. His last important office was as an American delegate to the World Monetary and Economic Conference in London in 1933.

The papers in this collection treat or refer to Morgenthau's many activities as a public servant. His family papers, while sketchy and incomplete, include the manuscript of an early autobiographical essay, various genealogical and family memorabilia, and a smattering of correspondence which is strongest not in the family series but in a separate category titled letterbooks. This series consists wholly of letters sent. Covering the years 1922 to 1940, it contains some correspondence with non-family members, but is notable on the whole for the handwritten
copies of the private messages which Morgenthau sent to his wife, to his son, Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and to a few other children and relatives. Also important in revealing the personal side of his career and involvements are the diaries Morgenthau kept. Clustered in two principal groupings, 1871 to 1886 and 1917 to 1948, they are perhaps most valuable for the decade beginning with the American entry into World War I. The researcher interested in Morgenthau's Paris Peace Conference activities will note that the entries in the collection for this period exist only in transcribed typewritten form.

The general correspondence in these papers contains numerous letters to and from important statesmen and diplomats, with the most substantive dealing with humanitarian issues such as the protection of weak and in some cases undefended minorities. In addition, there are many significant letters from lesser known individuals—Jewish leaders, heads of charitable organizations, and spokesmen for civic and religious groups in the United States and Middle East. As an example, much of the correspondence immediately after Morgenthau's appointment to Turkey concerns emergency relief to Jews in Palestine. The imminent joining of Turkey with Germany after the outbreak of war in 1914 meant that supplies and support for the Eastern European Jews living in what was then Turkish-controlled territory would be cut off. Among the persons Morgenthau corresponded with about this issue and the related one of Zionism are Jacob H. Schiff, Louis Marshall, Meyer Bloomfield, Lucien Wolf, Abram I. Elkus, and Arthur Ruppin. On a similar note, there is a substantial file of letters from Protestant lay and religious leaders here as well as abroad who mounted the World War I era campaign to save Armenia and Armenians from Turkish destruction. Complemented by numerous State Department memoranda, most of which are retyped copies used by Morgenthau in the writing of his various published memoirs, the file on the Armenian tragedy includes letters from James L. Barton, Cleveland H. Dodge, Herbert Adams Gibbons, Franklin E. Hoskins, William W. Peet, and Charles V. Vickrey.

Following the war, Morgenthau became involved in a controversial attempt to study and help resolve anti-Semitism in Poland. While data on the investigation can be found in various pertinent locations throughout the collection, including the general correspondence, they are most evident in the subject file under Poland. Available in this series are transcripts and notes on the commission's hearings, background documents of various origin, draft copies of the disputed final report, and a press file recording the reaction of the Polish populace. Also in the subject files are documentary materials which Morgenthau collected on such other projects as his involvement with
Turkish, Armenian, and Jewish (Palestine) questions; his national tour in 1919 to promote the goals of the League To Enforce Peace; his work in 1923–24 on behalf of Greek exiles with the Refugee Resettlement Commission; and his attendance at the London Conference.

The issue of Zionism was an abiding concern for Morgenthau and one that generated much debate. A reform Jew associated with the liberal wing of the German Jewish community in New York, he was an adamant spokesman for the viewpoint favoring assimilation into those state systems, especially the United States, where Jews were granted equal rights. The topic of Zionism and Palestine as a homeland appears as a discussion point throughout the collection, but is focused most dramatically in the special correspondence file containing Morgenthau's letters to and from Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. The two men broke relations over the question after having cooperated on many important projects involving the American reform movement in general and Jewish causes in particular. It was Wise above all others who convinced Morgenthau over his original objections to accept the post as Ambassador to Turkey. The position had been offered Morgenthau after the financier, who preferred a Cabinet office, helped organize the campaign budget for Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic National Committee during the 1912 election. Information on this campaign and subsequent ones is located in the general correspondence, in the Wise letters for 1912 and 1916, and in the subject files for each major election year until 1932.

The writings file in the Morgenthau papers includes drafts, notes, and final manuscripts for many of his speeches and his three memoirs. The memoirs cover aspects of his life as a businessman which are otherwise not well documented in the collection. Contemporary items on Morgenthau's youth and early career in New York real estate tend either to be limited to school papers in the subject file or to clippings and scrapbook materials in the miscellany.

Other correspondents in addition to those already mentioned include Newton D. Baker, James Bryce, Cary T. Grayson, Jean Jules Jusserand, James G. Harbord, Robert Lansing, Breckinridge Long, Ignace Paderewski, St. S. Papadakis, and Joseph P. Tumulty. There are a number of letters from Franklin Roosevelt, most before his Presidency, and also a few from William Howard Taft and Herbert Hoover.
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<tr>
<th>Container Nos.</th>
<th>Reel Nos.</th>
<th>Series Description</th>
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| 1-4           | 1-6     | Diaries, 1871-1940.  
Diaries by Morgenthau, including mostly originals and some transcripts, arranged in these categories and chronologically therein. As noted in the container list, two volumes in this series include notes and cash account records unrelated to the diary entries and for years different from that treated by the specific diary. There are also instances in which Morgenthau kept daily records of varying length and breadth in two or three volumes for the same year covering the same day. |
| 4-6           | 5-7     | Family Papers, 1832-1939.  
Correspondence to and from Morgenthau and various family members, manuscripts or transcripts of autobiographical essays by Morgenthau and his father, and miscellaneous biographical and genealogical matter, arranged alphabetically according to type or subject of material. |
| 6-11          | 6-11    | General Correspondence, 1879-1940.  
Letters to and from Morgenthau, with appended matter such as clippings and printed material. Arranged chronologically. |
| 12-14         | 11-13   | Letterbooks, 1922-40.  
Bound tablets of carbons of handwritten letters by Morgenthau to family members and others, arranged in general chronological order by tablet or volume. |
| 14-15         | 12-14   | Special Correspondence, 1909-32.  
Letters to and from Stephen S. Wise, arranged in chronological order. |
| 15-26         | 13-22   | Speeches and Writings, 1876-1941.  
Speeches, articles, and book manuscripts, in various drafts and stages of publication, from handwritten to typed to printed, with numerous notes and annotations and some background material. The book file is arranged alphabetically. |
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<td>13-22</td>
<td>by title. The speeches and articles are organized together in chronological order.</td>
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<td>26-42</td>
<td>22-35</td>
<td>Subject File, 1868-1936. Reports, copies of correspondence, various documents, clippings, printed matter, notes and notebooks, transcripts and galleys of writings of others, charts, organizational minutes, and miscellaneous other material, organized alphabetically by subject and chronologically therein. A few files under a subject title are arranged in the order scheme established by Morgenthau or his assistants.</td>
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<td>43-61</td>
<td>35-41</td>
<td>Miscellany, 1795-1940. Address books, Americana items collected by Morgenthau, announcements, certificates, awards, dinner lists, etc., poetry by others, and various printed matter, clippings, and photographs, many bound in scrapbooks or albums. Arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material, with the exception of the photographs, various oversize matter, and scrapbooks, which have been placed at the end of the collection.</td>
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| 1              | 1-2       | DIARIES, 1871-1940  
1871 (2 v.) (v. 1 also contains chemistry notes, 1871, and cash account records, 1871-84)  
1872 (3 v. and loose sheet) (v. 2 also contains school notes and study exercises)  
1873 (2 v. and loose sheet)  
1875  
1877 (3 v.)  
1880, 1882-83, 1886 (4 v.)  
1906 |
| 2              | 2-3       | 1917 (2 v.)  
1918-19 (2 v.)  
1920-21 (2 v.)  
1922-23 (2 v.)  
1924 (3 v.) |
| 3              | 4-5       | 1925-26 (4 v.)  
1927-29 (3 v.)  
1930 (2 v.)  
1931-32 (2 v.)  
1933-36 (4 v.) |
| 4              | 5-6       | 1939-40 (2 v.)  
Undated [1870's?]  
Transcripts  
1913-19 (6 folders) |
| 5              | 6         | FAMILY PAPERS, 1832-1939  
Correspondence  
Morgenthau, Josephine, 1882-1922  
Other  
Writings  
Autobiographies  
Henry, 1871  
Lazarus (transcript), 1842  
Other  
Biographical data, 1874-1932 and undated  
Business cards, labels, and related paraphernalia |
## FAMILY PAPERS, 1832-1939 (Continued)

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## GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1879-1940

1879-83, 1902-13
Jan.-Oct. 1914 (4 folders)

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## LETTERBOOKS, 1922-40

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## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1909-32

- Wise, Stephen S.
  1909-14 (3 folders)

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Prepared for microfilming by: Allan Teichroew
Date completed: December 1983
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