



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201-2483, U.S.A. PHONE (718) 560-5000

February 1, 2001

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

In a letter dated June 8, 1999, to all bodies of elders in the United States, we informed you of the possibility that some individuals associated with congregations may qualify to receive restitution as survivors of Nazi persecution. Some congregations sent names and contact information of potential claimants, to whom we sent preliminary questionnaire forms for submission to the court.

The court has now cleared the way for qualified individuals to apply for funds from the Swiss Banks Settlement Agreement. *Individuals who believe they qualify can apply even if they did not submit a preliminary questionnaire.* In addition, the German government has set up a fund for certain individuals who performed slave and forced labor without compensation. With these two funds, the categories of potential claimants have been broadened beyond that which we previously described, including relatives in certain circumstances. Therefore, the Governing Body has authorized the establishment of a temporary legal entity, Jehovah's Witness Holocaust-Era Survivors Fund, Inc. ("JWHESF"), to assist potential claimants and facilitate the disbursement of restitution. Of course, the decision to apply for restitution is left up to each individual.

JWHESF will contact all individuals whose names were submitted in response to the letter of June 8, 1999. Those who suffered Nazi persecution are now advanced in years, and many struggle with poor health and difficult living circumstances. The court is arranging special compensation for survivors in severe financial straits. JWHESF will help expedite distribution of aid to qualified brothers and sisters who have an acute need.—James 1:27.

We urge each body of elders to check once again for individuals in your congregation who experienced, or whose deceased relatives experienced, Nazi persecution, even if they were not Jehovah's Witnesses at the time. Please send any additional names, with their addresses and telephone numbers, to Jehovah's Witness Holocaust-Era Survivors Fund, Inc., 2800 Route 22, Patterson, NY, 12563-2226, by no later than April 1, 2001. This will allow JWHESF sufficient time to submit all claims before the August 11, 2001, deadline. Inquiries may be submitted by mail, telephone (845-306-3600), or fax (845-306-3571).

While only God's Kingdom can bring permanent relief to those who suffered loss, we should not overlook the comforting effect these modest payments may have on victims. We appreciate your loving cooperation with this arrangement.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.

[ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE READ BY A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION SERVICE COMMITTEE AT THE FIRST SERVICE MEETING AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST WATCHTOWER STUDY FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF THIS MAILING:]

“Persons associated with the Christian congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses and who are eligible for Holocaust-era restitution are being helped to submit applications, *whether or not they were Jehovah’s Witnesses during the Holocaust*. If you have not yet been contacted by Jehovah’s Witness Holocaust-Era Survivors Fund and you feel you may qualify to apply for compensation for losses you or your relatives suffered during World War II, please see the congregation secretary immediately after the meeting. Your name must be submitted by August 1, 2001, in order to meet the application deadlines.”

Additional Information To Be Provided Privately for Potential Claimants

Jehovah’s Witness Holocaust-Era Survivors Fund, Inc., (JWHESF) has been authorized by the Governing Body to inform and assist persons associated with the congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses who experienced loss or suffering as a result of the Nazi regime. Generally, the following categories of persons may apply:

- Those who performed slave or forced labor for the Nazis or their allies
- Those who suffered as children of slaves or forced laborers
- Those who suffered personal injury or loss of a child during the Nazi period
- Those who suffered property loss during the Nazi period
- Those who fled or attempted to flee to Switzerland during the Nazi period
- Those who were persecuted or harmed because of belonging to groups specifically targeted by the Nazi regime
- Those who were unable to reclaim Swiss bank deposits or insurance policies
- Those whose deceased relatives experienced any of the above

Please note that in most cases, relatives of deceased victims may apply only if the victim died *after* February 15, 1999.

Complete details are available by contacting:

Jehovah’s Witness Holocaust-Era Survivors Fund, Inc.
2800 Route 22
Patterson NY 12563-2226
Telephone: 845-306-3600
Fax: 845-306-3571

In view of impending deadlines, it would be preferable for a congregation elder or the potential claimant to telephone or fax the information to JWHESF before August 1, 2001.