

In closing, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending the Senate's best wishes for continued success to the new Eagle Scouts and to all those who have sustained Troop 358 over its 45 year history. •

BEN MEED, THE AMERICAN GATHERING OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS, AND GERMAN COMPENSATION

• Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise today to briefly comment on the program of German reparations being paid to Holocaust survivors. Over the past two years, we have looked extensively at the role Swiss banks played during the Holocaust. What we found was shocking. Clearly we discovered that in addition to carrying out the mass murder of millions of people, Jews and non-Jews, the Nazis carried off the greatest robbery in history.

After the war, the new government of Germany began a program of restitution for the survivors of the Holocaust. Over the past half-century, Germany has paid billions of dollars to survivors, but can we really say that this is enough? Can we say that it is fair that someone who survived, for example, five months in a concentration camp, but not the six required to obtain compensation, is fair? Can we say that it is fair that someone who survived a Gestapo prison should be denied compensation for their suffering? The answer to these questions is an emphatic NO!

It is time that Germany drop their reservations to paying compensation to all those who deserve it, regardless of income levels, regardless of the time spent enduring Nazi torture. All limitations should be dropped and each and every survivor, everywhere, regardless of their situation, should be provided with compensation.

Mr. President, Ben Meed, the President of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, makes these same points in a speech he gave at the National Leadership Conference in Washington on February 15, 1998. His speech is poignant and succinct. Holocaust survivors have little time left and they need help. I could not agree more with this wise man's conclusions. At this time, I ask unanimous consent that the text of his remarks be included in the RECORD.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to read Ben Meed's words and to help ease the suffering of these survivors of mankind's greatest inhumanity to man. I ask that they be printed in the RECORD.

The remarks follow:

REMARKS BY BENJAMIN MEED AT THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Distinguished guests, Fellow survivors, my younger colleagues and dear friends

Though many issues of importance will be raised during the day, I want to take this opportunity to convey the dismay and anger felt by survivors toward the reparations program established by Germany and to express

the survivors' goal to challenge those programs.

German compensation has become an extremely important—perhaps the most important—issue to survivors. Many survivors need the compensation. And most survivors, even those who would not accept German money before today demand rights for the payment. But time is Germany's ally; time is the enemy for survivors. As nature takes its course, we learn daily of the deaths of more survivors. That unfortunate fact only serves to emphasize the urgency of this matter.

We attend funerals almost daily. Let me also add that since the reparation program started over forty years ago, more than 50% of survivors receiving German pensions have passed away. Germany is not paying to the deceased or to their heir.

After the Holocaust, we survivors were in no position to negotiate directly—also many of us wanted nothing to do—with Germany. Though German money does go to some survivors, the amounts and the conditions attached to the funds humiliate us personally and collectively.

In 1951, Chancellor Adenauer announced that compensation for survivors was Germany's moral responsibility. And, since the 1950's, the Claims Conference has negotiated with Germany on behalf of the survivors. It has served as trustee for their collective interest, and we survivors are grateful for any help extended to us. But whatever was done, was not enough. Much more can be done and must be done quickly.

Until recently, survivors played virtually no role in Holocaust-related compensation matters. We did not negotiate with Germany; we did not decide how the German money would be used; and we did not distribute the money. All of these things were done without our participation.

Yes, the Claims Conference and their leaders deserve our appreciation for the work they did when we were unable to do it. The negotiations with Germany resulted in various compensation programs for survivors. There is the Federal Indemnification Law, the Hardship Fund and the Article 2 Fund. We all know that no amount of compensation can truly "pay" for the damage Germany did to our people. Yet the amount Germany has provided is shameful, and the conditions for eligibility are outrageous and humiliating; they are unacceptable today.

First, the amount Germany has paid is barely a start in repairing the destruction and human misery it caused. Our homes . . . our culture . . . our faith in our fellow man were destroyed. Who will give us back our families, our youth, our health. So much of our minds are still—and will always be—there. Any yet whenever some survivors receive payments, we are told, "look, see how much Germany pays to the survivors!" How can anyone talk about German "generosity" in the context of the Holocaust. It sounds big when you say Germany paid more than fifty billion dollars over forty years to Israel and to other countries in reparations. But think about it, how much did Germany's robbery amount to in four years of the Holocaust? Some historians today are estimating that the robbery was more than three hundred billion dollars worth of land, homes, gold, jewelry and personal belongings—beside murdering our six-million people.

Second, the individual payments Germany has made, though needed by many survivors, are typically small; they do not furnish a dignified life with modest security that Germany has a duty to provide.

Third, only survivors who were in a camp for a minimum of six months, or a ghetto for eighteen months, are entitled to German compensation; and you must prove it with

documentation which is difficult if not impossible to obtain. Can you imagine the fear and anguish which lingers from a single day in the Warsaw or Lodz Ghetto, Auschwitz, Buchenwald, or in hiding? Can the people who imposed these insensitive limitations have any idea of what one day in those places felt like? It didn't take a month or two—or certainly six months—to be abused, or to be plagued by nightmares, forever.

Finally, survivors must show virtual poverty—notbeduerftigt—to qualify for payments. This turns the payments into welfare. Thus, the very people targeted by the Nazis for murder are now treated as beggars or, at best, as charity cases. This is disgraceful and insulting to us. Compensation should be paid for what Germany did during the Holocaust; it should have absolutely nothing to do with the circumstances of our lives after the war struggling to rebuild our lives.

As a general matter, the selections the programs make—based on income, previous payments and other restrictive rules are upsetting reminders to survivors of the infamous selections made during the Holocaust. This, to us, is intolerable and cannot remain the same; it must be eliminated.

In sum, too many survivors have been excluded from German payments; too many who have gotten something have been paid too little; too many improper conditions—selections—have been imposed; and too many in immediate need of help will not receive compensation quickly enough to do any good. All this, in the name of humanity and justice, must be changed.

Germany has treated Holocaust reparations like any other business—get the best deal possible; pay as little as possible; and be done with it. Holocaust survivors deserve better. It may be that the claims of survivors are unprecedented; but that is because the Holocaust was unprecedented.

But as we are in the last stages of our lives, there are many needy and lonely survivors who live in distressing circumstances. With an average age exceeding 75, they feel forsaken, afflicted by illness and, in addition to the usual complications of growing old. They still carry the nightmares of the Holocaust.

Now we know that circumstances could have been very different had survivors played a larger role in the compensation negotiations with Germany. Germany would not have dared to take the adamant negotiating positions it regularly took with the Claims Conference had survivors who still bore the numbers of the camps tattooed on their arms been present. And if Germany had played "hard-ball", survivors—from the United States and elsewhere around the world—would or should have walked away from the negotiating table, and taken their case public, or to their own governments for support. For the last few years, we proved the importance of the survivors at the negotiating table. Yes, without survivors, we would not achieve these gains.

Survivors have dedicated themselves to not permitting the world to forget the Holocaust. They played a leading role in establishing museums, memorials and other Holocaust remembrance-related projects in Israel, the United States and elsewhere. We did this not for ourselves—we know what happened—but for the rest of the world, which had to be educated and reminded.

We now are equally determined to do what is necessary to make certain, in the little time we have left, that fellow survivors live out their years in dignity; not full of fear and frustration.

Germany's war against the Jews was more brutal and relentless than the war it waged even against the Allied soldiers. To fulfill its moral obligation, Germany should have a

compensation program which gives to every victim, even at this late date, the fullest possible coverage; enough compensation to establish a foundation upon which survivors can live out their lives in dignity, and with security. Germany not only can do it; it is the right thing for Germany to do.

The gross injustices done to Jewish Holocaust survivors should be the concern of everyone. Now it is clear what needs to be done: We want the removal of all restrictions in the German compensation programs; we want German compensation to be inclusive—to cover every remaining survivor; and survivors should be involved in every facet of German compensation; the negotiations and decisions about how the money is used.

My dear fellow survivors, I focus my comments today on Germany but we all know too well that other countries participated in the world's greatest robbery from our Jewish people in Europe. We commend those who are exposing these matters on every level. But we survivors know better that nothing, no nation could be compared to the greatest murder machine of Germany.

We should never forget this. Let us also not forget that we spent a lifetime after the Holocaust educating, documenting and commemorating the Holocaust. We must continue to stand on guard of Remembrance. We should never be blinded with the glitter of gold. The memory of our kedoshim should never be tarnished.

Let us work together, together let us demand what is right.●

TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN RED CROSS FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE RED RIVER VALLEY FLOOD RELIEF EFFORT IN 1997

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of "American Red Cross Month" to pay tribute to one of the most exemplary humanitarian organizations the world has ever known, and to specifically recognize how the Red Cross touched the lives of thousands of Minnesotans during the 1997 spring floods.

Each year, the Red Cross comes to the aid of victims of 66,000 disasters nationally. When disaster strikes, the Red Cross responds swiftly to the call to relieve human suffering and restore a sense of comfort and normalcy in the face of tragedy—a response honed over its 135 years of service.

This surely was the case when tragedy hit Minnesota in the form of severe flooding in the spring of 1997. When the Minnesota and Red Rivers overflowed their banks, it brought forth a flood of destruction and human misery unseen in this normally peaceful part of the country.

The Red Cross response to this catastrophe was swift and effective. With operations in three states—Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota—the Red Cross provided over 6,994 volunteers to aid in the flood relief effort. In addition, the Red Cross contributed direct assistance to approximately 11,867 families.

In Red Cross service centers, victims were provided with basic necessities which were made scarce or unattainable due to the floods. The extensive damage to private homes displaced thousands, prompting the Red Cross to

open 19 shelters which served 6,001 people. In all, the Red Cross served 1,179,950 meals at its 43 feeding sites and with its 64 mobile feeding units. The Red Cross was also able to provide fresh water, clothing, and blankets.

After the water had returned within its banks and it was time for people to return to their homes to begin to clean up the residue left by the flood waters, the Red Cross provided 12,754 clean-up kits to aid in this long process.

In a relatively short period of time, the river took away from some what it had taken a lifetime to build. In order to aid people in dealing with the mental strain brought by such a traumatic experience, the Red Cross made mental health professionals available, who attended to the needs of 15,498 individuals.

During the many weeks of flood recovery work, there were two instances where individuals generously gave significant monetary contributions to the victims of the flood. These anonymous donors were properly referred to as "Angels." While this label is indeed appropriate, it seems that it should also accurately be used to describe the thousands of Red Cross volunteers who came from all over this country and generously gave their time and labor to people known only to them by their need for assistance.

Mr. President, while this was indeed a dark time for Minnesotans in the flood areas, the uncompromising compassion of Red Cross volunteers provided a bright display of kindness, a light that shone in the hearts of the many who so generously gave their time and labor in the face of this great tragedy. On behalf of the people of Minnesota, I wish to offer my sincerest thanks to the men and women of the Red Cross and commend this fine organization for its relief efforts throughout the world.●

ORDER FOR STAR PRINT—S. CON. RES. 77

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that S. Con. Res. 77 be star printed with the changes that are now at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MAKING MAJORITY PARTY APPOINTMENTS FOR THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 191 submitted earlier today by Senator LOTT.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 191) making majority party appointments for the Committee on Governmental Affairs for the 105th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 191) was agreed to, as follows:

S. RES. 191

Resolved,

SEC. 1. That the following be the majority membership on the Committee on Governmental Affairs for the remainder of the 105th Congress, or until their successors are appointed, pursuant to section 2 of this resolution:

Governmental Affairs: Mr. THOMPSON (Chairman), Mr. ROTH, Mr. STEVENS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. NICKLES, and Mr. SPECTER.

SEC. 2. That section 1 of this resolution shall take effect immediately upon the filing of the report by the Committee on Governmental Affairs as required by Senate Resolution 39, agreed to March 11, 1997.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1998

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 5, and immediately following the prayer, the routine requests through the morning hour be granted, and the Senate resume consideration of S. 1173, the so-called ISTEAL legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, tomorrow, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1173, the ISTEAL legislation. Under the consent agreement, Senator BINGAMAN will be offering an amendment on liquor drive-throughs. Following 30 minutes of debate, the Senate will then debate on the Dorgan amendment on open containers for 60 minutes. At 10:30 on Thursday, the Senate will proceed to two consecutive votes on the Dorgan and Bingaman amendments—Dorgan first and then Bingaman.

Following those votes, it is hoped that the Senate will be able to adopt the funding amendment, which is the so-called Chafee amendment, the underlying amendment we have been dealing with today, and then begin consideration of the McConnell amendment regarding disadvantaged businesses. We hope to be able to enter into a time agreement with respect to the McConnell amendment immediately following those two back-to-back votes. The Senate will continue to consider amendments to the ISTEAL legislation throughout the day on Thursday and into the evening. As a reminder to all Members, the first rollcall votes tomorrow will occur at 10:30 a.m., back to back.