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U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council: Tour - Interfaith Council of the Holocaust - 8/7

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Sarah

pls. see me
right away,

Bobbie

~~2273~~
* General Counsel
Handled

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Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
01. Memo	Rex Scouten to Bobbie [Kilberg], re: Interfaith Council on the Holocaust Student Exchange Program. (1 pp.)	07/25/89	P-5	

Collection:

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Office: Public Liaison, Office of
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7/31

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 25, 1989

TO: BOBBIE KILBERY

FROM: REX W. SCOUTEN, CURATOR



SUBJECT: INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST STUDENT EXCHANGE
PROGRAM

I am having the students in for a tour probably on the
afternoon of Monday, August 7th.

With the unique program and the interesting background of
the exchange students, would it be advantageous for the President
to meet them?

Interfaith Council on the Holocaust

Founded 1977 as the Philadelphia Coordinating Council on the Holocaust

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REV. CHARLES A. CARTER, III
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RABBI DAVID A. WORTMAN

July 25, 1989

Mr. Rex Scouten
Curator, The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Scouten:

The Interfaith Council on the Holocaust presents educational programs teaching the lessons of the Holocaust and making them relevant to contemporary society. This outreach to the broad community of the Delaware Valley is accomplished through conferences, exhibitions, teacher-training workshops, seminars and film presentations.

Plans have been completed for an exchange program that will allow young people the opportunity to consider aspects of the Holocaust significant to their personal lives. Thirty German and American university students have been selected to spend the month of August, 1989 together. Fifteen German students will travel to the United States for a two-week period of interaction with fifteen of their American counterparts. The entire group will then journey together to Germany and Poland for another two week period. Emphasis will be on an intensive encounter by both the German students and the American students with the difficult subject of the role of second and third generation post-Holocaust youth in addressing their diverse pasts and in finding the tools necessary to build on those pasts for the future. The program's goal is to provide a confrontation with both the past and the future, which will be a life-transforming experience. The participants will have an impact on young people as well as adults they encounter after the exchange program has concluded. Perhaps even the birth process for the next generation of Holocaust teachers in Germany and in the United States will result.

Mr. Rex Scouten
July 25, 1989

Page 2

As a most important part of this program, the participants will be spending two intensive days in Washington, D.C., discovering, on a first-hand basis, the fabric of American democracy and the political system at work. The Interfaith Council on the Holocaust would be most honored with the opportunity to bring this extraordinary group of young people to the White House. We are arriving in Washington on Monday, August 7 at 1:00 p.m. and will be in the city until the evening of Tuesday, August 8.

I am enclosing profiles of the American and German participants. We hope you find this material informative.

Sincerely,



Ruth Laibson
Executive Director

RL:vj

Enclosures

PROFILES OF AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS
INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON THE HOLOCAUST
STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM - AUGUST, 1989

ISAC BLOCH

Age 21. Jewish (orthodox). From Lido Beach, New York. Junior at University of Pennsylvania. Majoring in biomedical engineering. Raised in Mexico.

"There comes a time when I have to find out about the 'Them' I've always been told about. Who are the children of these people my parents were separated from, and what are they like? (What are) their thoughts and feelings about what happened in the past, and what can be done for the future?"

JULIE ELENA BLUE

Age 22. Protestant. From Huntington, New York. Senior at Swarthmore College. Majoring in English. Product of an interfaith marriage (Jewish - Christian).

"I am wondering what the experiences of the German students on this exchange program have been. I am anxious to find out how their experiences have affected their understanding of themselves, their culture, and other religious peoples."

JUSTIN C. DePASQUALE

Age 20. Roman Catholic. From Kingston, Pennsylvania. Sophomore at Dickinson College. Majoring in religion. Considering the priesthood.

"What intrigues me most about the Holocaust is the fact that the tragic attitude which aided its destructive force has the same potential for reeking havoc in my own life - here, today in the present. The phrase which comes to my mind and seems most appropriate...is, 'and the good shall do nothing.'"

Profiles

Page 2

ARIANE DIMITRIS

Age 21. Jewish. From Jericho, New York. Junior at Bryn Mawr College. Majoring in the growth and structure of cities. Interfaith family (Greek Orthodox and Jewish Orthodox).

"I am glad that the country chosen for the program was Germany. Not only is it at the core of the experience, but by visiting it, we will see that it is more than just a living museum. Just as the survivors of the Holocaust are a new people who have been changed by the experience, so are the Germans."

LEON DOW

Age 19. Jewish. From Houston, Texas. Sophomore at Princeton University. Majoring in religion. Has political aspirations.

"Too many times people have turned from history; too frequently people are so constrained by the particularity of their own situation that they cannot examine it in a larger context, in a historical scope. So why am I interested in this program? I hope that from such a program I would emerge with more fully developed answers to questions of philosophical and ethical norms, personal values, and the function and potential of government."

JEREMY B. HALBERSTADT

Age 19. Jewish. From Wilmington, Delaware. Freshman at University of Pennsylvania. Dual major in economics and anthropology. Lost family members in the Holocaust.

"Preventing the injustices of the Holocaust from reoccurring is an obligatory prerequisite to universal human dignity and respect. Holocaust study and remembrance is the particular duty of today's youth, who are responsible for passing its message about the horrors of prejudice and hate to future generations."

Profiles
Page 3

DANISTA EULALIE HUNTE

Age 21. Roman Catholic African-Caribbean. From Baltimore, Maryland. Junior at Vassar College. Majoring in science, technology and society - reads, writes and comprehends German well.

"Teaching one another in an honest and caring manner is the only way to understanding each other. This can only be achieved through dialogue and communication. This program would allow that type of interaction to occur freely between people who would not have otherwise met."

OLIVER BENJAMIN KARP

Age 19. Jewish African-American. From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Freshman at Goucher College. Majoring in English. Has studied both modern Hebrew literature and the ancient scriptures.

"It is my most sincere desire to join those who are active in the effort to excise the...occurrences of prejudice that if left alone will spread and kill. Thankfully, however, it is in the first stages of the disease of racism that we are most able and likely to cure and heal. History has shown us where the tendencies of scapegoating and stereotyping lead us, and if there are to be no more Auschwitzes or Dachaus, we must start in the schools."

SUZANNE R. KAZENOFF

Age 20. Jewish. From Rocky Point, New York. Junior at Swarthmore College. Majoring in English with high concentration of religion courses.

"I want to be a participant in the program because my feelings about Germany and the Holocaust on an intellectual level deviate greatly from my feelings on an emotional level. I am striving towards a more tolerant perception. Dealing with German students, actually going to Germany and seeing/feeling Auschwitz for myself seems like a constructive and potentially rewarding starting point for my personal battle with the Holocaust."

Profiles

Page 4

SUSAN DIANE LEVY

Age 19. Unitarian African-American. From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sophomore at Spelman College. Majoring in English. Has participated in Black-Jewish student exchange program.

"I am very familiar with the saying, 'History repeats itself,' and I believe that it is only true if we, as leaders and young people, allow it to be so. I believe that with the power of knowledge of history and with strong leadership, history will not repeat itself but instead, will be made...(to) create a better future."

ADINAH S. MILLER

Age 19. Jewish. From Bayonne, New Jersey. Sophomore at Haverford College. Majoring in history. In January brought teaching materials to distribute to Jewish communities in the Soviet Union.

"Seeing the pit on Ratomskaya Street (Minsk) in which 50,000 Jews were murdered (during World War II) really made me rethink my perspective on the Holocaust and reconsider the role which our generation must play in keeping the history of the Holocaust alive. We must deal with how we can 'never forget' while still moving on to accept a new generation of Germans who cannot rightfully be held responsible for their parents' actions."

KEINO ROBINSON

Age 19. Baptist African-American. From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sophomore at Haverford College. Dual major in political science and economics. Has participated in Black-Jewish student exchange program.

"I hope to create a better awareness within the majority population, by showing the pride that each minority group has in its respective background and culture. As a student of color, I hope to learn much about myself as an African-American, as well as about others. The opportunity would allow me to further my education on the plight of the Jews in Europe and compare the experience to Blacks during slavery in America."

Profiles
Page 5

LENA H. SCHAYE

Age 21. Jewish. From New York, New York. Junior at Bryn Mawr College. Dual major in sociology and English. Has recently decided to become a practicing Jew.

"I would value not only the incredible opportunity of communicating with the German students on their experiences, but the Jewish students as well. I think that I can offer to your program a unique outlook on what it means to be Jewish. In my search for a community to which I can belong, I have not rejected those people in my life who are not Jewish, but rather incorporated them into my newly discovered world. Their questions help me to explore my decision."

JULIE-ANN SCHILLING

Age 21. Roman Catholic. From Blairstown, New Jersey. Junior at Rider College. Majoring in journalism. Serving as an intern at the Holocaust/Genocide Resource Center at Rider College.

"Today's young adults are the future of America. It is up to us to make a change for the better (in) the world today. It is not the memory of the Holocaust that people must not let die, but the idea that it takes every individual in and of himself to contribute to life, or to destroy it."

KARIN VAN DERZEE

Age 19. Congregationalist (U.C.C.). From Sherman, Connecticut. Sophomore at Dickinson College. Majoring in anthropology. Hopes to become a missionary.

"Questions that the Holocaust should raise are not often uttered in this day and time. In words and discussions, my mind can block out what neither ~~it~~ nor my heart can comprehend: how could it happen? How could we let it happen? Within the proposed program, I will not be able to dodge these questions. As much as it scares me, I know that it is time once again to dust off our past and seek its truths and its prophecies, for the Holocaust speaks not only of yesterday, but of today as well."

PROFILES OF GERMAN PARTICIPANTS
EXCHANGE PROGRAM: "HOLOCAUST"

ANDROWSKY, BIRGIT

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Special Education and Biology
Member of a Baptist Church
21 years old

"I hope to learn more facts about Holocaust from survivors. I think that will enable me to better understand German history. It is my opinion that, as a future teacher, I need to know much about the dark sides of our history, in order to be able to cope with current political events (Republikaner and other right-wing activities)."

BERGMANN, JAN-MICHAEL

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Law and Protestant Theology
22 years old

"My expectations concerning the program come first of all from my interest in German history and thus in today's possible relationships with Jews. Furthermore, I am interested in the Jewish religion. At the moment my knowledge is poor, which I regret."

BOMHOFF, HARTMUT

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Modern History, Art History, and German Literature
Also attends classes at the Department for Jewish Studies
and the Center for Antisemitism Research
24 years old

"I trust that the various lectures and discussions which are part of the program will shed some light on the behavior of European Gentiles and the reaction of the outside world during the Holocaust and help to explain how easily inertia can grip one's moral forces when confronted with crime and terror.... I hope that this seminar will remind us of the survivor's constant pain and encourage us to voice our special responsibility towards minorities and the weak, i.e. fighting racism and advocating Human Rights world-wide."

GERDES, UTA

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies History and Protestant Theology
Protestant
22 years old

"The concept of this exchange program appeals to me particularly in that it is not only oriented towards facts and discussion, but it is an opportunity to experience Jewish life today - and that will help us to better deal with the past, particularly in that we will be coming into contact with survivors of the Holocaust."

GOERKE, GISA

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Special Education (handicapped children) and Biology
Protestant
23 years old

"It is important to me to learn about the reasons for the Holocaust, to find ways for me to do something against the new rising of neo-Nazism in Germany. As a future teacher it is important to me to come to know all about those problems.... In my opinion, the dialogue between the young generations is fundamental step towards understanding and tolerance."

EIMTERBÄUMER, STEPHAN

Student at Münster Universität
Studies Protestant Theology (hopes to become a pastor
Lutheran
21 years old

"From the program I expect that we'll deal with the subject that is - without being mentioned - at once in the back of my mind when I at first meet a Jew. There is very little opportunity here in Germany to work on this together with Jews. I hope that our international as well as multi-faith approach will help to overcome the paralysation that is characteristic for Germany in this regard.... To meet survivors of the Holocaust on the one hand seems to me a great opportunity, on the other a difficult task that brings along a lot of responsibility."

HERMES, CLAUDIA

Student at Universität Bonn
Studies Political Science, Spanish, and Ethnology
Protestant
21 years old

"I expect from the program an insight into the view of American Jews and some information about the so-called "Jewish Lobby" and its influence. The stay in a family of survivors and the Poland program will not be easy because of psychological reasons. People of my generation are not responsible for what has happened, but I am German and the grandfather's generation is still alive, so I really appreciate that those survivors will invite us to stay with them for a while and to enter into a painful remembering of the past."

KNOOP, GESCHE

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Languages (French and German)
Grew up Lutheran
23 years old

"The 'Deutsches Volk', an ideological expression which is

this people and I'm not able to understand its history. Especially because I can't duplicate the important factor 'antisemitism' which was appropriate with the Fascists."

MEZGER, ANNETTE

Just completed the "Abitur"
 Hopes to study Theology following a social work year in a hospital
 Protestant
 Lives in Leinfelder
 20 years old

"I expect a good community with one another. I wish to get to know the Jewish culture, and a deepening with the subject of the Holocaust and the effects and consequences for today."

MISERA, KATHRIN

Student at the Universität München
 Studies Law and Philosophy
 Roman Catholic
 21 years old

"Above all... my reason for joining the programme is to meet concerned person and people who are affected themselves so that the Holocaust and its consequences of today become a personal concern of mine. Siegfried Lenz, the 1988 winner of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade Association, put the issue into the words: 'Auschwitz is put into our hands. It is put into our hands as well as the whole of the German history. To live in peace with it is an illusion.' To be aware of and learn how to deal with this unrest, possibly to communicate it to others, is my main expectation and wish."

RASPE, LUCIA

Student at the Freie Universität
 Studies Americanistic

Waiting on profile from Lucia.

ROSEMEYER, BIRGIT

Student at Göttingen Universität
 Studies Protestant Theology
 Protestant
 21 years old

"I hope that by the personal contact with young Americans I will come to know the situation of the American Jews, how they live, how they manage the experience of the Holocaust (this concerns especially the German immigrants) and how they are or feel integrated in American society. Which cultural and political influence do they have? Does anti-semitism play an important part in America? Interesting might be also their relation to Israel and its present policy in the Palestinian question."

SCHIRMER, MATTHIAS

Student at the Freie Universität
Studies Political Science
Grew up Protestant (father is a pastor)
25 years old

"From this exchange programme I expect a first look into the mentality of young American Jews, jewish life in the U.S., and interesting discussions with a generation that knows - like me - nazi barbarism and Holocaust only from listening and historical sources. Sure, Holocaust must never be forgotten and the million names of its victims too. Just young Germans have to keep this memory alive. But it is the same important to me, to search together for the factors that caused antisemitism and racism (and to start to cause them now again in Western Germany)."

SCHONEVELD, ESTHER

Studying at the University in Leiden/Holland
Studies Psychology and English
Born in Jerusalem/lives in Holland
Protestant
19 years old

"I think I first became conscious of World War II and the name 'Hitler' when I came to Germany in 1980. After having lived in Israel and living in Germany, it began to interest me and it has done so ever since.... There is still a lot to learn and to try to understand and there is a lot to remember so we can try to prevent things like the Holocaust to happen again. I know we will all learn a lot."

*Freie Universität is the University in Berlin-West