

# CLAIMS RESOLUTION TRIBUNAL

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In re Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation  
Case No. CV96-4849

## **Certified Award**

to Claimant Carmen Brigitta Bar-David

## **in re Account of Jacques Funt**

Claim Number: 205545/AH

Award Amount: 47,400.00 Swiss Francs

This Certified Award is based upon the claim of Carmen Brigitta Bar-David, née Funt (the “Claimant”) to the account of Jacques Funt (the “Account Owner”) at the Zurich branch of the [REDACTED] (the “Bank”).

All awards are published. Where a claimant has not requested confidentiality, as in this case, only the name of the bank has been redacted.

## **Information Provided by the Claimant**

The Claimant submitted a Claim Form identifying the Account Owner as her father, Jacques (Yacob) Funt, who was born 5 September 1894 in Ploesti, Romania. The Claimant stated that her father was married to Luiza Sufrin in 1929 in Ploesti, and that he and his wife had only one child, the Claimant. The Claimant indicated that between 1933 and 1938, her father worked as chief accountant in the textile company *Buhushi Ltd.* in Bucharest, Romania and then, until 1940, as an accountant at the *Gobot Ltd* company in Timisoara, Romania. The Claimant indicated that as of 1939, her family resided at 11 and 23 August Street in Timisoara. The Claimant further indicated that Jacques Funt, who was Jewish, was forced out of work by Nazi-inspired legislation in 1940 and was imprisoned in a slave labor camp in Pancota, Romania from 1942 until 1943. The Claimant indicated that she and her parents emigrated from Romania to Israel in 1951, that her father died on 18 October 1971 in Haifa, Israel, and her mother died on 3 March 1999, also in Haifa, Israel. The Claimant submitted various documents including identity documents indicating her father’s name, a travel certificate of her parents indicating their address in Timisoara, and her father’s death and inheritance certificates. The Claimant indicated that she was born on 23 January 1930 in Ploesti.

## **Information Available in the Bank Records**

The bank records consist of a list of accounts considered for inclusion in an internal bank survey in 1959 of dormant accounts and a printout from the Bank’s database. According to these records, the sole Account Owner was Jacques Funt who resided in Timisoara, Romania. The bank records

indicate that the Account Owner held an account of unknown type, which was opened on an unknown date. The bank survey dated 1 January 1959 indicate that the account was frozen in 1947, the year assets in Swiss banks belonging to Romanian citizens were frozen, and that the account's balance as of the survey date was 906.00 Swiss Francs. The bank records do not show if or when the account at issue was unfrozen, closed, or to whom it was paid. The auditors who carried out the investigation of this bank to identify accounts of Victims of Nazi Persecution pursuant to instructions of the Independent Committee of Eminent Persons did not find this account in the Bank's system of open accounts, and they therefore presumed that it was closed. These auditors indicated that there was no evidence of activity on this account after 1945. There is no evidence in the bank records that the Account Owner or his heirs closed the account and received the proceeds themselves.

## **The CRT's Analysis**

### Identification of the Account Owner

The Claimant has plausibly identified the Account Owner. The name of the Claimant's father matches the published name of the Account Owner, and the city of residence of the Claimant's father, as demonstrated by the Claimant in written evidence, matches the published city of residence of the Account Owner. In support of her claim, the Claimant provided detailed information about her parents, their whereabouts before and during the Second World War, and various documents including copies of her parents' travel certificate, the death certificates of her father and her mother, and her own identity documents. The CRT notes that there are no other claims to the Account of Jacques Funt.

### Status of the Account Owner as a Victim of Nazi Persecution

The Claimant has made a plausible showing that the Account Owner was a Victim of Nazi Persecution. The Claimant stated that the Account Owner was Jewish and that he was forced out of work by the imposition of Nazi-inspired legislation in 1940 and he was imprisoned in a slave labor camp in Romania from 1942 to 1943.

### The Claimant's Relationship to the Account Owner

The Claimant has plausibly demonstrated that she is related to the Account Owner. The Claimant stated that the Account Owner was her father, and submitted her father's death and inheritance certificates.

### The Issue of Who Received the Proceeds

The CRT notes that it is possible that, if the account was still open in 1950, it could have been transferred to the Romanian government pursuant to an agreement between Switzerland and Romania whereby unclaimed assets held by Romanian citizens in Swiss banks were to be transferred to the Romanian government in return for compensation for Swiss property that had been nationalized by Romania's communist regime. Given this possibility, the persecution of Jews

in Romania and the confiscation of Jewish assets during the War, the Communist dictatorial regime after the War, and the application of Presumptions (h), (i), and (j), as provided in Article 28 of the Rules Governing the Claims Resolution Process (the “Rules”) (see Appendix A), the CRT concludes that it is plausible that the account proceeds were not paid to the Account Owner or his heirs. Based on its precedent and the Rules, the CRT applies presumptions to assist in the determination of whether or not Account Owners or their heirs received the proceeds of their accounts.

### Basis for the Award

The CRT has determined that an Award may be made in favor of the Claimant. First, the claim is admissible in accordance with the criteria contained in Article 18 of the Rules. Second, the Claimant has plausibly demonstrated that the Account Owner was her father, and that relationship justifies an Award. Finally, the CRT has determined that it is plausible that neither the Account Owner nor his heirs received the proceeds of the claimed account.

### Amount of the Award

The bank records indicate that the Account Owner held an account of unknown type and that the value of the account as of 1 January 1959 was 906.00 Swiss Francs. According to Article 29 of the Rules, if the amount in an account of unknown type was less than 3,950.00 Swiss Francs, and in the absence of plausible evidence to the contrary, the amount in the account shall be determined to be 3,950.00 Swiss Francs. The present value of the amount of the award is determined by multiplying the balance as determined by Article 29 by a factor of 12, in accordance with Article 31(1) of the Rules, to produce a total award amount of 47,400.00 Swiss Francs.

### **Scope of the Award**

The Claimant should be aware that, pursuant to Article 20 of the Rules, the CRT will carry out further research on her claim to determine whether there any other Swiss bank accounts to which she might be entitled, including research of the Total Accounts Database (consisting of records of 4.1 million Swiss bank accounts which existed between 1933 and 1945).

### **Certification of the Award**

The CRT certifies this Award for approval by the Court and payment by the Special Masters.

Claims Resolution Tribunal  
March 11, 2003

## APPENDIX A

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the Tribunal presumes that neither the Account Owners, the Beneficial Owners, nor their heirs received the proceeds of a claimed Account in cases involving one or more of the following circumstances:<sup>1</sup>

- a) the Account was closed and the Account records show evidence of persecution, or the Account was closed (i) after the imposition of Swiss visa requirements on January 20, 1939, or (ii) after the date of occupation of the country of residence of the Account Owner or Beneficial Owner, and before 1945 or the year in which the freeze of Accounts from the country of residence of the Account Owner or Beneficial Owner was lifted (whichever is later);
- b) the Account was closed after 1955 or ten years after the freeze of Accounts from the country of residence of the Account Owner or Beneficial Owner was lifted (whichever is later);
- c) the balance of the Account was reduced by fees and charges over the period leading up to the closure of the Account and the last known balance of the Account was small;
- d) the Account had been declared in a Nazi census of Jewish assets or other Nazi documentation;
- e) a claim was made to the Account after the Second World War and was not recognized by the bank;
- f) the Account Owner or Beneficial Owner had other Accounts that are open and dormant, suspended, or closed to profits, closed by fees, or closed to Nazi authorities;
- g) the only surviving Account Owner or Beneficial Owner was a child at the time of the Second World War;
- h) the Account Owners, the Beneficial Owners, and/or their heirs would not have been able to obtain information about the Account after the Second World War from the Swiss bank due to the Swiss banks' practice of withholding or misstating account information in their responses to inquiries by Account Owners, Beneficial Owners, and heirs because of the banks' concerns regarding double liability;<sup>2</sup>
- i) the Account Owners, Beneficial Owners, or their heirs resided in a Communist country in Eastern Europe after the War; and/or
- j) there is no indication in the bank records that the Account Owners, Beneficial Owners, or their heirs received the proceeds of the Account.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland - Second World War, Switzerland, National Socialism and the Second World War: Final Report (2002) (hereinafter "Bergier Final Report"); see also Independent Committee of Eminent Persons, Report on Dormant Accounts of Victims of Nazi Persecution in Swiss Banks (1999) (hereinafter

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"ICEP Report"). The CRT has also taken into account, among other things, various laws, acts, decrees, and practices used by the Nazi regime and the governments of Austria, the Sudetenland, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the Free City of Danzig, Poland, the Incorporated Area of Poland, the *Generalgouvernement* of Poland, the Netherlands, Slovakia and France to confiscate Jewish assets held abroad.

<sup>2</sup> See Bergier Final Report at 443-44, 446-49; *see also* ICEP Report at 81-83.

<sup>3</sup> As described in the Bergier Final Report and the ICEP Report, the Swiss banks destroyed or failed to maintain account transactional records relating to Holocaust-era accounts. There is evidence that this destruction continued after 1996, when Swiss law prohibited destruction of bank records. Bergier Final Report at 40 (stating "[i]n the case of Union Bank of Switzerland . . . , however, documents were being disposed of even after the Federal Decree [of 13 December 1996]"). The wholesale destruction of relevant bank records occurred at a time when the Swiss banks knew that claims were being made against them and would continue to be made for monies deposited by victims of Nazi persecution who died in the Holocaust and that were (i) improperly paid to the Nazis, *see Albers v. Credit Suisse*, 188 Misc. 229, 67 N.Y.S.2d 239 (N.Y. City Ct. 1946); Bergier Final Report at 443, (ii) that were improperly paid to the Communist controlled governments of Poland and Hungary, *see* Bergier Final Report at 450 -51, and possibly Romania as well, *see* Peter Hug and Marc Perrenoud, Assets in Switzerland of Victims of Nazism and the Compensation Agreements with East Bloc Countries (1997), and (iii) that were retained by Swiss Banks for their own use and profit. *See* Bergier Final Report at 446-49.

"The discussion on "unclaimed cash" persisted throughout the post-war period due to claims for restitution by survivors and heirs of the murdered victims, or restitution organizations acting on their behalf." *Id.* at 444. Nevertheless, the Swiss Banks continued to destroy records on a massive scale and to obstruct those making claims. ICEP Report, Annex 4 ¶ 5; In re Holocaust Victim Asset Litig., 105 F. Supp.2d 139, 155-56 (E.D.N.Y. 2000). Indeed, "[i]n May 1954, the legal representatives of the big banks co-ordinated their response to heirs [of account holders] so that the banks would have at their disposal a concerted mechanism for deflecting any kind of enquiry." Bergier Final Report at 446. Similarly, "the banks and their Association lobbied against legislation that would have required publication of the names of so called 'heirless assets accounts,' legislation that if enacted and implemented, would have obviated the ICEP investigation and the controversy of the last 30 years." ICEP Report at 15. Indeed, in order to thwart such legislation, the Swiss Bankers Association encouraged Swiss banks to underreport the number of accounts in a 1956 survey. "A meager result from the survey," it said, "will doubtless contribute to the resolution of this matter [the proposed legislation] in our favor." ICEP Report at 90 (quoting a letter from the Swiss Bankers Association to its board members dated June 7, 1956). "To summarize, it is apparent that the claims of surviving Holocaust victims were usually rejected under the pretext of bank secrecy . . . ", Bergier Final Report at 455, or outright deception about the existence of information, while wholesale destruction of bank records continued for over a half century. Under these circumstances, utilizing the fundamental evidentiary principles of United States law that would have applied to Deposited Assets claims had the class action lawsuits been litigated through trial, the CRT draws an adverse inference against the banks where documentary evidence was destroyed or is not provided to assist the claims administrators. *See In re Holocaust Victim Asset Litig.*, 105 F. Supp.2d 139, 152 (E.D.N.Y. 2000); Reilly v. Natwest Markets Group, Inc., 181 F.3d 253, 266-68 (2d Cir. 1999); Kronisch v. United States, 150 F.3d 112, 126-28 (2d Cir. 1998).