

Week Ending Friday, February 20, 1998

**Statement on Signing the Holocaust
Victims Redress Act**

February 13, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1564, the Holocaust Victims Redress Act. This bill enables the United States Government to provide further assistance to needy Holocaust survivors and also strengthens current U.S. efforts aimed at encouraging countries that possess gold looted from Holocaust victims to donate those assets to the Nazi Persecution Relief Fund. It further recognizes the need for long overdue archival research and translation services to set the historical record straight.

My Administration has worked hard to bring whatever measure of justice might be possible to Holocaust survivors, their families, and the heirs of those who perished. We have pressed for restitution of property and for the full declassification of archives so that confiscated assets can be traced and restored to their rightful owners. To speed progress toward that goal, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in conjunction with the Department of State will co-host in June an international conference on Nazi assets.

As I sign this bill into law, I note that section 102(a), which purports to direct the President on how to pursue negotiations with foreign states, raises constitutional concerns. Article II of the Constitution confers on the President alone the Executive powers of the United States, which includes special authority over foreign affairs. Although I support the policies underlying this provision, it can be read to interfere with my discretion over matters of foreign policy, and I will therefore construe the provision as precatory.

There can be no way to deliver full justice for the many millions of victims of Nazi persecution, and we know that the unspeakable losses of all kinds that they suffered will never be made whole. Yet it is my hope that with this bill, we can help provide some dig-

nity and relief to those who were subjected to the ultimate barbarism of the Holocaust, and that it will hasten the restitution that they undeniably deserve.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: S. 1564, approved February 13, was assigned Public Law No. 105-158. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks at a Democratic
Congressional Campaign Committee
Reception in Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania**

February 13, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Martin. Thank you, Diane. I think that it was so easy to raise money for this because everybody wanted to come see your place, myself. [*Laughter*] It is a truly beautiful, beautiful home, and we thank you for having us here.

I thank Congressman Klink and Congressman Fattah, and Congressman and Mrs. Holden for being here. And Joe Hoeffel, I thank you for being here and for having the courage to run again. This time I think you will be rewarded. Thank you very much.

I've had a wonderful day in Philadelphia, and the mayor has painted a rosy picture of it, but I'd say it was fairly accurate. The people of Pennsylvania have been good to me and to my family and to the Clinton-Gore administration. The people of Philadelphia have been especially good. In the last election, I think, we won the city by more than 300,000 votes. And I am very, very grateful.

I also want to thank Ed Rendell for always being there, for helping us raise money for Democrats across the country, as well as for me and for the Vice President. And I want you to know I really appreciate Martin Frost because in good times and bad times he's been willing to get out here and try to stick