



SALZBURG SEMINAR

September 23, 1999

The Honorable Judah Gribetz
Richards & O'Neil, LLP
885 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Judge Gribetz,

I write to propose an idea for your consideration with regard to the Swiss Banks Case. The Salzburg Seminar Project on Reconciliation hopes to convene an ongoing, annual series of symposia intended first, to address unresolved issues of the Holocaust such as property restitution, compensation for forced labor, and legal measures against war criminals, and second, to frame guidelines for dealing with similar post-conflict situations, of which there seem to be an increasing number in our contemporary world.

The many Holocaust-related issues with which governments, institutions, and individuals must cope are, in fact, replicated, in whole or in part, in other parts of the world. The purpose of the proposed Project is three-fold:

- (1) to review on a continuing basis the unresolved issues related to the Holocaust.
- (2) to explore viable and equitable solutions to these unresolved issues.
- (3) to help frame policy guidelines that can be applied to other post-conflict societies in which egregious human and civil rights abuses have been committed.

The Project would capitalize on the Seminar's unique convening capacity and its fifty-one-year-old reputation as a neutral forum for the discussion of complex social, political, cultural, and moral issues. In recent years, the Seminar has provided a forum for reconciliation discussions between Israelis and Arabs, Czechs and Slovaks, Protestants and Catholics from Northern Ireland, and most recently, Muslims, Croats, and Serbs from Bosnia.

We envision the Project to consist of one annual symposium of fifty to sixty participants. The symposium would last four to five days and would bring together representatives from the public sector, private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and research institutions. The symposium would be structured to review general progress in various Holocaust-related matters, and then focus on issues and cases of particular relevance at the time. If funding permits, the Project would also convene occasional smaller special sessions to address specific issues that may arise. Issues may include disputes over ownership of art work, property claims, and claims against particular companies or industries.

A series of standing expert advisory committees might serve as resources for helping to identify specific issues to be addressed as well as helping to identify relevant participants for the symposia. The advisory committees might on occasion be convened to provide expert opinions on particular matters. The advisory committees would include eminent legal experts, government officials, historians, financial experts, and other appropriate individuals.

I would welcome an opportunity to talk with you about the work of this unusual and exceptional organization. In the meantime, here is a brief overview. The Salzburg Seminar has existed since 1947, bringing together promising mid-career professionals from around the world to explore political, social, and cultural issues of global concern. The Seminar was founded on the ideal that free, open, and unhampered discussion among individuals helps build the bridges of communication and cooperation necessary to establish peace in the world. Focused on core subjects, given depth by a faculty of exceptional accomplishment and a multinational body of participants, sessions consist of lectures, discussions, and working groups, and also provide time and opportunity for individual study, reflection, and informal conversation.

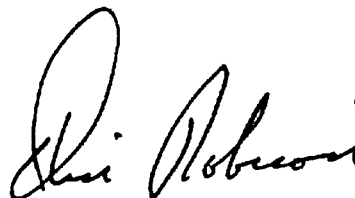
“There are hundreds of seminars in the prestige-conscious firmament of academe,” Newsweek magazine has written, “but few can rival the eminence of the Salzburg program.” The Salzburg Seminar is an independent, nonprofit, educational institution with executive offices in Middlebury, Vermont, and our center of activity in Salzburg, Austria, at Schloss Leopoldskron, an eighteenth-century castle on the outskirts of the city. All participants live, work, and dine together for the duration of a session, a fact that contributes to the unique and intense Salzburg experience. The fifty-five to sixty Fellows who participate in each session are competitively selected by application. Many are recommended through the Seminar’s extensive alumni network, now numbering more than 20,000 individuals in 150 countries.

The goal of Salzburg Seminar sessions is to bring together in a productive way the worlds of scholarship, public policy, and practice. In each of its sessions, the Seminar seeks balanced representation from among the world’s regions in both its faculty and Fellows. The results of the Seminar sessions include broadened perspectives and the increased flow of information across international borders, to the benefit of the individuals, institutions, and nations involved.

We believe that the Seminar’s Project on Reconciliation would provide a forum for sustained dialogue on Holocaust-related issues. The Seminar has always brought people who have experienced war, discrimination, and ethnic and racial hostility to a safe, neutral place where deliberation, discussion, and debate can be conducted and solutions to seemingly intractable problems considered.

I understand that one of the possible categories for use of the settlement money is that of “education.” It is against that possibility that we ask you to consider placing \$6,000,000 of the settlement money into an endowment fund at the Salzburg Seminar to fund an annual session on Reconciliation in perpetuity. This would produce an annual income of \$300,000 to carry out the program described above. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Olin Robison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "O" and "R".

Olin Robison
President

Enclosures