

# WHY THE MEANS TEST SHOULD BE STRICKEN

*By: Sarah Traister Moskowitz*

1. The means test allows the perpetrators of murder, slave labor, and suffering to discount the grave injuries to the victims by ignoring everything that victims have suffered by focusing only on present economic state.

2. In no court where a single civil or criminal action is under consideration would the perpetrator be allowed to become the judge of the victim, whom the perpetrator had robbed of parents, home, physical social and emotional well being. Yet not only is this the case in the present circumstances, but even more bizarre is that all the damage done to the victims is allowed to be ignored unless the victim lives at poverty level!

3. To require a Holocaust Survivor to live at poverty level in order to be considered for some token of justice and apology confuses restitution with charity. Restitution requires that wrongs perpetuated over long years of Holocaust suffering be recognized regardless of the victims means. To have lost your parents in childhood, to live all your life with images of how they died, and to have been deprived of their presence, encouragement guidance and love must be recognized for the lifelong suffering caused. The survivor's economic state is irrelevant to the crimes endured.

4. Living beyond the poverty level is no guarantee that the survivor does not live with traumatic memories, nightmares, and vulnerability throughout life to persistent bouts of depression related to subsequent losses. We must not ignore that the usual events of children leaving home, a mate becoming ill, a financial set-back can trigger catastrophic reactions of overwhelming stress in survivors because it puts them back in to the earlier terrors of loneliness and loss experienced in the Holocaust. And it is these consequences of having lived under Nazi genocide that should be kept in focus for restitution.

5. When the United States compensated its Japanese citizens for having interned them in camps during WW II ( camps that were neither slave labor nor death camps) it did so outright, without requiring a means test.

6. No means test is required for retired SS to pick up their monthly pensions.

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