

RETURN TO AN ADDRESS OF THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DATED WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2009 FOR THE

REPORT OF THE SPOLIATION ADVISORY PANEL IN RESPECT OF EIGHT DRAWINGS NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE SAMUEL COURTAULD TRUST



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The Right Honourable Sir David Hirst

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REPORT OF THE SPOLIATION ADVISORY PANEL IN RESPECT OF EIGHT DRAWINGS NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE SAMUEL COURTAULD TRUST

Introduction

1. In this case we are considering a claim by the heirs of Professor Dr Curt Glaser (Glaser) against the Samuel Courtauld Trust (the Courtauld) in respect of eight drawings now in the Courtauld's collection. Messrs Rowland & Associates of 2 Park Avenue, New York, who are the heirs' representatives, under individual powers of attorney, assert that the drawings were the subject of a forced sale by auction in May 1933 as a result of Nazi persecution against Glaser, who was Jewish by birth. They seek the transfer of the drawings.

The Panel's task

- 2. The task of the Spoliation Advisory Panel is to consider claims from anyone, or from their heirs, who lost possession of a cultural object during the Nazi era (1933-1945) where such an object is now in the possession of a UK national collection or in the possession of another UK museum or gallery established for the public benefit; and to advise the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on what action should be taken in relation to the claim (see our Constitution and Terms of Reference at Appendix 1). Since the Courtauld is a registered charity, it clearly comes within the latter category of institution. For this and other reasons, outlined below, we are satisfied that the claim falls within our jurisdiction.
- 3. In making this report we have considered the submissions by the claimants and by the Courtauld, in order to decide whether Glaser was deprived of the drawings as a result of spoliation and, if so, to assess the moral strength of the claimants' case, to decide whether any moral obligation rests on the Courtauld and to advise the Secretary of State accordingly. In performing these functions, our paramount purpose is to achieve a solution which is fair and just both to the claimants and to the institution.

The heirs' status as claimants

4. Glaser left all his property to his second wife, Marie Glaser (Marie), and the claimants are relatives of Marie via her surviving sister or her deceased sister, or descendants of her second husband, Dr Ernest Ash. All the relevant wills are in evidence before us, and establish the heirs' respective titles.

The drawings

- 5. The drawings comprise the following:
 - (a) *An Architectural Sketch*, attributed to Domenico Fossati, pen and ink, 21.8 x 24 cms;
 - (b) A Kitchen Still-Life, Domenico Piola, pen and ink and chalk, 18 x 28.9 cms;

- (c) *Saint Charles Borromeo*, Giovanni Battista Crosato, pen and ink, watercolour and graphite, 21 x 17.4 cms;
- (d) *A Group of Figures with Bacchus*, Giuseppe Bernardino Bison, pen and ink, watercolour and red chalk, 26.4 x 19.8 cms;
- (e) *The Flight into Egypt*, Giuseppe Bernardino Bison, pen and ink and watercolour, 23.7 x 18.2 cms;
- (f) *Centaurs Embracing 1911*, Lovis Corinth, graphite, 48.3 x 33.4 cms;
- (g) *Laundresses*, Pierre Auguste Renoir, graphite and pen and ink, 31.4 x 22.5 cms; and
- (h) *The Lamentation*, Italian School, 17th Century, black chalk, pen and ink and watercolour, 9 x 12.7 cms.
- 6. The drawings were acquired by Count Antoine Seilern (Seilern) at an auction of part of Glaser's collection held in Berlin in May 1933, and formed part of Seilern's celebrated Princes Gate bequest in 1978 to the Home House Society, to which the Courtauld is now the successor body.

Chronological narrative

- 7. Throughout his life Glaser was acknowledged as a distinguished and eminent expert in modern art from the 19th century onwards. During the 1920s, together with his first wife, Elsa, he was an influential modern art collector and patron. Their collection included works by artists such as Edvard Munch, Max Beckmann, Lovis Corinth and Max Klinger. His home in Berlin was a prominent salon for artists and intellectuals.
- 8. In 1924 he was appointed Director of the Staatliche Kunstbibliothek (State Art Library) in Berlin, and held this post until early 1933. Meanwhile, in July 1932, he suffered a tragic loss when Elsa died, depriving him both of a devoted wife and of a major influence in the development of his collection. He gave a famous painting by Edvard Munch to the Nationalgalerie in Berlin in her memory.
- 9. The Nazis came to power on 30 January 1933. On 7 April they enacted the Law for the Restitution of a Professional Civil Service, which allowed the dismissal of state employees who were Jewish or regarded as politically unreliable. Although Glaser had converted to Protestantism in 1914, his Jewish origins manifestly earmarked him as a target for Nazi oppression, all the more so because he had been a prominent supporter of the Weimar Republic, and a protagonist of the modern art which the Nazis abominated.
- 10. On 7 April 1933, Glaser was suspended from his position as Director of the State Art Library; at the same time, it was officially announced that he had been dismissed, and this was formally confirmed the following September.
- 11. On 4 April, the Gestapo had seized the entire building at Prinz-Albrecht Strasse, where Glaser had occupied an apartment provided for him as Director of the Library, for use as its headquarters.

- 12. At two auction sales in 1933 Glaser sold the bulk of his large collection. The first auction was held on 9 May at the Internationales Kunst und Auctions-Haus G.m.b.H. The second, at which the drawings were sold, took place at the Max Perl Auction House on 18 and 19 May. Both sales were advertised in advance and were accompanied by detailed catalogues including guide prices for each work. Having regard to his expertise, there can be no doubt that Glaser himself must have been principally responsible for the compilation of these catalogues. Glaser was not named as the vendor, but was identified as such by the journal *Pantheon* in its May issue.
- 13. A distinguished art historian, Ludwig Burchard, attended both auctions. Burchard was a friend both of Seilern and of Glaser. In a letter to Seilern dated 14 May, he reported that the prices at the first auction had been "correctly established". He also reported that he had viewed the objects due to be sold at the Max Perl Auction House less than a week later and predicted that the second auction would "go the same way".
- 14. At the second auction, Burchard annotated his copy of the catalogue (now in the Courtauld's possession) with prices of the items purchased by Seilern, including the eight drawings. These were not significantly different from the guide prices, and in aggregate fractionally exceeded the latter (284 reichsmarks against 275 reichsmarks).
- 15. Burchard also noted in the catalogue against one lot that it had been a present from him to Glaser and against a number of pen drawings by Matisse that they had hung together in Glaser's ante-room, demonstrating that he knew Glaser was the vendor and that he was familiar with Glaser's apartment.
- 16. On 19 May, the closing day of the second auction, Glaser wrote to Edvard Munch in a letter now in the custody of the Munch Museum in Oslo as follows:

"Since the death of my wife the whole world of my past has gradually crumbled (...) until there was nothing left. It started with something apparently quite trivial, the death of my dog. For me this was a sign from which the rest ensued. I had to give up my apartment, I lost my position. Since I found it pointless to rent a large new home at this point, I have freed myself of all my possessions, so that I might start over again completely new. Your pictures are on loan, hanging at the Kronprinzenpalais [the Nationalgalerie], and they could stay there. Everything that burdened me had to go. Since then I have felt freer, and fortunately, out of all that failure, a new beginning has emerged.

For some time now I have been living with a woman much younger than me but very close to me. I would never have imagined that this could happen and I did nothing to bring it about. But I am not made to be alone and now, when it would be particularly difficult to sustain the blows of fate without the help and love of another, I am doubly happy to have found this woman."

- 17. Glaser married Marie on 30 May, having lived with her in her apartment after being forced out of his official residence. They left Germany for good in June or early July 1933, travelling first to France and then via Italy to Switzerland, where they rented a house at Ronco near Ascona.
- 18. Shortly after his arrival in Switzerland, Glaser arranged for 14 large crates to be shipped from Berlin to Ronco, as described by Marie in an affidavit dated 22 December 1962, sworn in the German compensation proceedings referred to below, as follows:

"Before leaving Berlin Curt Glaser had stored about 14 boxes with a freight forwarder. These crates contained art objects, silver, valuable porcelain, carpets and other treasures. I know that the contents of these boxes were highly insured. Moreover I know that Curt Glaser had paid the storage and forwarding costs. Of course I can no longer recall the amount. After renting the house in Ronco, my husband had the boxes sent to him. I recall that the crates were very large. I do not remember whether the delivery was paid in Switzerland, or in advance in Germany."

- 19. In addition to this consignment, Glaser was able to remove a number of valuable paintings from Germany to Switzerland. On 15 July 1933, he wrote to the Nationalgalerie authorising his brother to remove five paintings by Munch that he had deposited on loan; four of these were subsequently sent on to Zurich. Between 1935 and 1939, Glaser deposited eight paintings with the Kunsthaus Zurich, including six by Munch, one of which in 1938 Glaser had managed to have removed from the Nationalgalerie and transferred to Switzerland.
- 20. Glaser continued to receive a pension equivalent to 75 per cent of his final salary from January 1934 until at least November 1935 and possibly, according to the Courtauld, for longer.
- 21. In May 1941, Glaser and Marie emigrated from Switzerland to the USA and settled in New York, where he died in November 1943.
- 22. In the 1950s and 1960s, Marie submitted claims under German compensation laws for the loss of her husband's job, and for the loss of his art collection, on the basis that he was a victim of Nazi racial persecution. Her application was supported by the affidavit referred to above, in which she also testified that the auctions resulted in sales 'at virtually rockbottom prices'. Furthermore, her sister-in-law Elly Glaser testified in an affidavit sworn on 12 February 1962 that Glaser had told her husband and herself that the results of the auction came close to being a total loss. In October 1959, Marie was awarded 25,839.81 deutschmarks in damages for Glaser's loss of earnings and pension benefits on the basis that he was the victim of Nazi racial persecution. By a settlement dated 6 December 1963, Marie agreed to accept 7,100 deutschmarks for the monetary loss realised from the auction sales. Marie died on 9 August 1981.

The Panel's objective

23. The Courtauld's legal title to the drawings is not contested, in our opinion properly so, since any legal claim appears to us to be time-barred under the Limitation Act 1939 (as amended). However, under our Terms of Reference, paragraph 12(e), we are required to give "due weight" to the moral strength of the claimants' case. This obligation widens the scope of our assessment beyond strict legal considerations.

The key issues

- 24. The key issues are:
 - (1) Was the sale, as the claimants unequivocally assert, a forced sale as a result of Nazi persecution? Or was it, as the Courtauld asserts, predominantly a voluntary sale

because Glaser wanted to make a fresh start, free from the attachments of his old life?

- (2) Were the sums for which the drawings sold at the auction such as they could have been expected to command in an open market unaffected by circumstances of Nazi oppression?
- (3) What consequences (if any) should be attached to the conduct of the Courtauld and any other relevant party in regard to this matter?
- (4) Is the moral strength of the claimants' position sufficient in all the circumstances to justify a recommendation that the drawings be transferred to them?

The claimants' case on causation

- 25. Glaser was directly subject to racial persecutory measures, the first of which occurred when he was suspended on 7 April 1933 from his government position pursuant to the law, passed the same day, permitting the Nazis to discriminate against Jews in the public service. This direct discriminatory action against Glaser prevented him from earning a living. He also lost the apartment which went with his job and in which he had kept the drawings.
- 26. Indirectly there were additional persecutory measures that affected Glaser, including the establishment of the Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, and the establishment of the concentration camps. Glaser was subject to the risk of arrest and incarceration in a concentration camp owing to his prominence as a Nazi opponent and to his Jewish origin.
- 27. As a result of these various measures, the claimants contend that Glaser had no choice other than to flee Germany. The decision to leave led to his next decision, to sell the bulk of his collection at the two auction sales. Thus there is a direct causal relationship between the sales and Nazi persecution, as was specifically determined in the German compensation proceedings.
- 28. The claimants conclude by asserting that any further analysis regarding the prices paid, or the good faith or otherwise of Seilern, is unnecessary, as Glaser clearly was directly subject to racial persecutory measures implemented by state action, and the auction sale was the direct result of specific persecutory action imposed under the 7 April 1933 law prohibiting Jews from holding public office; this conclusion is supported by the determination of the German compensation proceedings during the 1950s and 1960s.

The Courtauld's case on causation

- 29. The letter to Munch dated 19 May, while suggesting that Glaser connected the sale with the loss of his apartment and his office, also suggests that the death of his wife and the desire to make a new start for himself were major factors in his decision to dispose of the works, and that he did so out of his own free will rather than under any compulsion.
- 30. By mid-April, announcements of the auctions had begun to be published in the art press in Berlin. All these sales would have required a considerable amount of planning, especially

considering the number of lots to be sold. This is likely to have required at least several months of planning, which strongly suggests the auctions were not in fact brought about by the loss of his apartment, or as a result of his loss of office.

- 31. The Courtauld notes that it is not in dispute that Glaser's loss of office and of his apartment, the death of his first wife, and the political climate must all have influenced his decision to leave Germany, but this did not necessarily lead inexorably to the conclusion that he was forced to do so in 1933. It is crucial that the situation at this time should be examined objectively. He decided to leave when he did because of events political but also personal outside his own control. As he mentioned in the 19 May letter, he wanted to start anew, and the death of Elsa, with whom he had built up the collection over many years, appears to have been as decisive a factor as the fear of Nazi persecution in his decision to unburden himself of all material attachments which reminded him of his old life. Indeed, by then Glaser had already been living for some time with Marie, whom he would soon marry.
- 32. There is no clear evidence to demonstrate that, but for the actions of the Nazis, Glaser would have retained possession of the works. The disposals occurred very shortly after the Nazis came to power and long before their worst excesses were committed. Subsequently, Glaser was able to arrange for crates with art works to be transported out of the country after his and his wife's departure, and he continued to be in contact with the German museums where he had left paintings and was able, for a lengthy period after the sales, to arrange for them to be moved out of the country.

The Panel's conclusions on causation

- 33. There is a wide contrast between the approaches of the two parties, with the claimants focusing on Nazi persecution as the direct cause, while the Courtauld maintains that both Nazi persecution and Glaser's free choice were contributory factors, with the latter predominating.
- 34. We are satisfied that Glaser's decision to sell the bulk of his collection and leave Germany stemmed from mixed motives. We must therefore identify the extent to which Glaser's decision to sell the drawings can be attributed to the personal threat of Nazi oppression, and the apprehension of other adverse results from the Nazis' accession to power.
- 35. The considerations cited by the Courtauld are in our view significant factors. The letter to Munch clearly demonstrates that Glaser was looking forward to starting a new life and, to that extent, his release from previous responsibilities was not unwelcome, although we must bear in mind that it was written at a moment when his emotions may have clouded his judgement. His removal of valuable possessions after his departure from Germany signifies that he had retained some room for manoeuvre; the same applies to his pension.
- 36. However, doing our best to place ourselves in the context of Nazi Germany in 1933, we are satisfied that the threats to Glaser were intimidating, for reasons advanced by the claimants. Nor can we disregard the view of the German compensation authorities in the 1960s, although it is exceedingly unlikely that they were aware of the letter to Munch and certain that they cannot have seen the Burchard evidence, which is lodged in the Courtauld's archives.

37. On balance we have concluded that Nazi persecution was the predominant motive in this case. However, we do not accept the claimants' submission that this is itself decisive, since, as already noted, our moral assessment must take account of all relevant circumstances.

The auction prices

- 38. The claimants rely on the testimony of Marie and of her sister-in-law in support of their claim that the drawings were sold at an undervalue. The Courtauld relies on the Burchard letter and the annotated catalogue as showing that the auction prices reflected the market prices at the time.
- 39. The Burchard letter and the catalogue are exactly contemporaneous with the auctions. Burchard was a friend of both Glaser and Seilern with no axe to grind, and was an expert familiar with Glaser's collection. He considered the prices at the first auction were correctly established and his prediction that the second auction would go the same way was vindicated by the comparison between the guide prices and the prices in fact realised.
- 40. Marie and her sister-in-law, on the other hand, were testifying nearly 30 years after the event, and their recollections may have been coloured by their natural sense of outrage and their dissatisfaction at the prices achieved. We do not impugn their honesty and do not doubt that Glaser might, in later life, have voiced disappointment at the prices achieved in a market depressed by the general economic conditions at the time.
- 41. We prefer the contemporaneous and authoritative evidence of Burchard. By "correctly established" we think he meant that the prices accorded with the prevailing market value. Similarly, we regard it as likely that the auctioneers, when fixing the guide prices (no doubt in close consultation with Glaser) would have sought to reflect that general market. Consequently, we have concluded that the prices paid for the drawings at the second auction were reasonable market prices, reflecting the general market in such objects and were not depressed by circumstances attributable to the Nazi regime.

Assessment of the moral strength of the claim

- 42. As already noted, this requires consideration of all relevant circumstances and not merely causation. Nevertheless, causation is an important factor, and weighs the balance in the claimants' favour, though perhaps less heavily than if Glaser's motivation had been unmixed.
- 43. On the other side of the equation, Glaser obtained reasonable market prices at the auction, and in addition Marie was awarded compensation, albeit modest, under the agreed settlement in the German proceedings, which stipulated that the awarding authority will 'seek to conclusively settle all claims filed by the petitioners for compensation'. Transfer of the drawings would therefore confer on the claimants double recompense.
- 44. Although the claimants advance no criticism either of Seilern or of the Courtauld, our Terms of Reference (paragraph 12(g)) oblige us to 'consider whether any moral obligation rests on the institution, taking into account in particular the circumstances of its acquisition of the object and its knowledge at that juncture of the object's provenance'.

- 45. Seilern was an eminent scholar who vehemently opposed the Nazi regime. He paid the market price for the drawings, and was advised by Burchard, who also had a friendly relationship with Glaser. It is highly unlikely that either Seilern or Burchard would have stooped to take advantage of Glaser. Moreover Seilern, far from practising any subterfuge, was completely candid about the drawings' provenance, identifying them meticulously in his catalogues of 1959, 1961 and 1971 as 'Provenance: Curt Glaser, sale, Max Perl, 18-19 May 1933' or in similar terms. We see no grounds for criticism of Seilern.
- 46. The Courtauld acquired the drawings as part of the Princes Gate Collection in 1978 under Seilern's will. The drawings formed only a minute fraction of this huge bequest, which comprised 126 paintings, 361 drawings, 276 prints, 4 manuscripts, 29 bound volumes and 11 antique picture frames. Accompanying the collection were the catalogues referred to above, running to some dozen volumes detailing each object's provenance, with individual plates illustrating them, together with a book detailing every known fact about them. These volumes were the fruit of Seilern's scholarly research over a lifetime of collecting. The Courtauld had no reason to single out these drawings for special consideration, or any reason to suspect that the acquisition of such carefully catalogued works was other than above board. If, however, the Courtauld had focused special attention on them, as we have done, we conclude on balance that it would have reached the same conclusion as to Seilern's integrity. We see no grounds for criticism of the Courtauld.

The Panel's final conclusion

47. In all the circumstances, we consider that the claimants' moral claim is insufficiently strong to warrant a recommendation that the drawings should be transferred to them. We also consider that, whenever any of the drawings is on show, the Courtauld should display alongside it a brief account of its history and provenance during and since the Nazi era, with special reference to the claimants' relationship with and historical interest in the drawings. We recommend to the Secretary of State accordingly.

Wednesday 24 June 2009

The Rt Hon Sir David Hirst – Chairman Sir Donnell Deeny Professor Richard J Evans Sir Terry Heiser Professor Peter Jones Martin Levy Peter Oppenheimer Professor Norman Palmer Ms Anna Southall Dr Liba Taub Baroness Warnock

Appendix: Constitution and Terms of Reference

SPOLIATION ADVISORY PANEL CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members of the Panel

1. The members of the Spoliation Advisory Panel ('the Panel') will be appointed by the Secretary of State on such terms and conditions as he thinks fit. The Secretary of State shall appoint one member as Chairman of the Panel.

Resources for the Panel

2. The Secretary of State will make available such resources as he considers necessary to enable the Panel to carry out its functions, including administrative support provided by a Secretariat ('the Secretariat').

Functions of the Panel

- 3. The task of the Panel is to consider claims from anyone (or from any one or more of their heirs), who lost possession of a cultural object ('the object') during the Nazi era (1933-1945), where such object is now in the possession of a UK national collection or in the possession of another UK museum or gallery established for the public benefit ('the institution'). The Panel shall advise the claimant and the institution on what would be appropriate action to take in response to such a claim. The Panel shall also be available to advise about any claim for an item in a private collection at the joint request of the claimant and the owner.
- 4. In any case where the Panel considers it appropriate, it may also advise the Secretary of State:
 - (a) on what action should be taken in relation to general issues raised by the claim; and/ or
 - (b) where it considers that the circumstances of the particular claim warrant it, on what action should be taken in relation to that claim.
- 5. In exercising its functions, while the Panel will consider legal issues relating to title to the object (see paragraph 12(d) and (f)), it will not be the function of the Panel to determine legal rights, for example as to title.
- 6. The Panel's proceedings are an alternative to litigation, not a process of litigation. The Panel will therefore take into account non-legal obligations, such as the moral strength of the claimant's case (paragraph 12(e)) and whether any moral obligation rests on the institution (paragraph 12(g)).
- 7. Any recommendation made by the Panel is not intended to be legally binding on the claimant, the institution or the Secretary of State.

8. If the claimant accepts the recommendation of the Panel and that recommendation is implemented, the claimant is expected to accept the implementation in full and final settlement of his claim.

Performance of the Panel's functions

- 9. The Panel will perform its functions and conduct its proceedings in strictest confidence. The Panel's 'proceedings' include all its dealings in respect of a claim, whether written, such as in correspondence, or oral, such as at meetings and/or hearings.
- 10. Subject to the leave of the Chairman, the Panel shall treat all information relating to a claim as strictly confidential and safeguard it accordingly save that (a) such information which is submitted to the Panel by a party/parties to the proceedings shall normally be provided to the other party/parties to the proceedings in question; and (b) such information may, in appropriate circumstances, including having obtained a confidentiality undertaking if necessary, be communicated to third parties. 'Information relating to a claim' includes, but is not limited to the existence of a claim, all oral and written submissions, oral evidence and transcriptions of hearings relating to a claim.
- 11. In performing the functions set out in paragraphs 3 and 4, the Panel's paramount purpose shall be to achieve a solution which is fair and just both to the claimant and to the institution.
- 12. For this purpose the Panel shall:
 - (a) make such factual and legal inquiries, (including the seeking of advice about legal matters, about cultural objects and about valuation of such objects) as the Panel considers appropriate to assess each claim as comprehensively as possible;
 - (b) assess all information and material submitted by or on behalf of the claimant and the institution or any other person, or otherwise provided or known to the Panel;
 - (c) examine and determine the circumstances in which the claimant was deprived of the object, whether by theft, forced sale, sale at an undervalue, or otherwise;
 - (d) evaluate, on the balance of probability, the validity of the claimant's original title to the object, recognising the difficulties of proving such title after the destruction of the Second World War and the Holocaust and the duration of the period which has elapsed since the claimant lost possession of the object;
 - (e) give due weight to the moral strength of the claimant's case;
 - (f) evaluate, on the balance of probability, the validity of the institution's title to the object;
 - (g) consider whether any moral obligation rests on the institution taking into account in particular the circumstances of its acquisition of the object, and its knowledge at that juncture of the object's provenance;
 - (h) take account of any relevant statutory provisions, including stipulations as to the institution's objectives, and any restrictions on its power of disposal;

- (i) take account of the terms of any trust instrument regulating the powers and duties of the trustees of the institution, and give appropriate weight to their fiduciary duties;
- (j) where appropriate assess the current market value of the object, or its value at any other appropriate time, and shall also take into account any other relevant circumstance affecting compensation, including the value of any potential claim by the institution against a third party;
- (k) formulate and submit to the claimant and to the institution its advice in a written report, giving reasons, and supply a copy of the report to the Secretary of State; and
- (1) formulate and submit to the Secretary of State any advice pursuant to paragraph 4 in a written report, giving reasons, and supply a copy of the report to the claimant and the institution.

Scope of advice

- 13. If the Panel upholds the claim in principle, it may recommend either:
 - (a) the return of the object to the claimant; or
 - (b) the payment of compensation to the claimant, the amount being in the discretion of the Panel having regard to all relevant circumstances including the current market value, but not tied to that current market value; or
 - (c) an ex gratia payment to the claimant; or
 - (d) the display alongside the object of an account of its history and provenance during and since the Nazi era, with special reference to the claimant's interest therein; and
 - (e) that negotiations should be conducted with the successful claimant in order to implement such a recommendation as expeditiously as possible.
- 14. When advising the Secretary of State under paragraph 4(a) and/or (b), the Panel shall be free to recommend any action which it considers appropriate, and in particular may, under paragraph 4(a), direct the attention of the Secretary of State to the need for legislation to alter the powers and duties of any institution.

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