

5-12-00  
Tribute to M. J. Les Cerman

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
REMARKS AT TRIBUTE TO MILES LERMAN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
MAY 12, 2000 (SHOWN MAY 31, 2000)

Good evening. The President and I are honored to add our voices to the many people paying tribute to Miles Lerman tonight. We only wish we could be there in person to celebrate his decades of extraordinary public service -- and his commitment to a national treasure that has educated and inspired the world.

It was seven years ago that Bill and I sat with Miles as the Museum was dedicated. On that April day, I remember the hopes we all had for an institution that would ensure that we never forget those who perished in the Holocaust. That we never forget what can happen when evil goes unchecked. And that we never forget our responsibility to learn from the past - and build a better future for all human beings.

That is the vision that Miles Lerman has worked tirelessly to fulfill. That is the powerful legacy that he now leaves behind.

Miles, I know how meaningful this journey must have been to you, especially as a survivor. I think of the courage it must have taken you and your wife, Chris, to return to Poland, and turn those terrible memories into a source of understanding for us all. And I think about the 14 million people who have visited the museum, learned the lessons of the Holocaust, and left determined to stand up to hatred and division whenever and wherever they arise.

And so, Miles, on behalf of the President and a very grateful nation, I want to say thank you for your extraordinary leadership, vision, and dedication. Thank you for never giving up on the dream of this Museum and its mission. And thank you for all you've done -- and all you will continue to do -- to help preserve history and humanity for every generation to come.

Thank you. Good luck -- and Godspeed.