

University; and Paul V. Ciochetti, former principal, and Lauren F. Elias, principal, B.W. Tinker Elementary School.

Remarks at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum *April 18, 2001*

Thank you very much. [*Applause*] This is a hallowed place. Please behave yourself.

It's an honor for us to be here. Laura and I have just come from a fantastic tour. I want to thank Rabbi Greenberg for his hospitality and Ruth Mandel for her hospitality and the Director, Sara Bloomfield, for giving us such a special evening. Thank you all very much for your graciousness, and I want to thank you all very much for coming. And it's an honor for me to be here with members of my White House staff, friends of mine from all around the country.

This isn't like any other museum. It bears witness to the best and to the worst of the human heart. The images here stay with you, and only by confronting them can we begin to grasp the full enormity of the Holocaust. I urge Americans planning a visit to Washington to come here themselves and see what we have just seen.

History records many atrocities before and after the 1930s and 1940s. But it was the Holocaust that forced us to find a new term for horrors on such a scale—a crime against humanity. Human evil has never been so ambitious in scope, so systematic in execution, and so deliberate in its destruction.

In places like this, the evidence has been kept. Without it, we might forget the past, and we might neglect the future. And we must never forget. We must always remem-

ber both the cruelty of the guilty and the courage and innocence of their victims.

So many stories from the concentration camps will never be told because many of the witnesses did not survive. The stories we have must be preserved forever: Stories of mothers sacrificing themselves to save their children; stories of children trying to shield their parents; stories of men and women praying and comforting one another in the last moments on this Earth. These tell the greater truth of the Holocaust: The evil is real, but hope endures. Above all, this museum is a testament to hope.

Tomorrow I will have the honor of joining in the Days of Remembrance observances at the Capitol. I will convey America's commitment to the memory of 6 million who died in the Holocaust, our commitment to averting future tragedies, and our commitment to a friend, as a friend, to the Jewish people—to their cause and to the nation they built. I hope to see many of you at the Capitol tomorrow.

Thank you all for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. in the Hall of Witness. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Irving Greenberg, chair, and Ruth B. Mandel, vice chair, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council; and Sara J. Bloomfield, Director, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.