



OFFICE OF
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

April 2, 2008

Elie Wiesel
New York, New York

Dear Elie:

It gives me great pleasure to add my congratulations to the many you'll be receiving as you inaugurate the President's Lecture at the City College of New York and are presented with an honorary degree in recognition of your life's work.

It is fortuitous that this event is taking place less than two weeks before the holiday of Passover, when the song "Dayenu" is traditionally recited, celebrating that if G-d had only brought the Jewish people out of Egypt and nothing more, that would have been enough; or if the Eternal One had given them only the Sabbath, or the Torah, that in turn would have been enough.

Reflecting on your life's work, the word "dayenu" comes to mind. If you only had survived the Holocaust and been able to live a productive and decent life, that would have been all anyone could ask of you; if you had survived and also written Night, that alone would have been an extraordinary gift to our world; if you had written Night and also spoken out on occasion when your conscience would not let you be silent, no one could expect more. But, at a point when most people understandably would feel they'd done enough, you chose to dedicate your life anew to the cause of human rights by establishing the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity -- and anyone who knows you knows you're not finished yet!

I'm glad you have chosen to speak about "Confronting Fanaticism: Building Moral Unity in a Diverse Society." As often as I can get an audience, I talk about the need to build a global society based on shared benefits, shared responsibilities, and shared values. People often ask if we really can have a world of shared values when people come from so many different backgrounds and traditions. My answer is that I believe that we can -- if we agree that the most important of those values is that every life has value, everybody counts, everyone deserves a chance, and we all do better if we work together.

Congratulations again on this well-deserved honor, and best wishes for a memorable and meaningful event.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton