

ARTHUR AND ROCHELLE BELFER

**Exemplary  
LESSONS**  
i n i t i a t i v e

**BRINGING THE  
HOLOCAUST UNIT  
TO CLOSURE:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR  
THE FUTURE**



Photo: President Clinton (center) and Elie Wiesel (right) light the eternal flame during the 1993 dedication ceremony of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *USHMM*

**HANDOUT 1**

**PRESIDENT CLINTON'S AND ELIE WIESEL'S REMARKS ON BOSNIA TROOPS**

Dec. 13, 1995

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 13, 1995

REMARKS BY

THE PRESIDENT AND ELIE WIESEL

IN STATEMENT FROM THE OVAL OFFICE

Oval Office 10:40 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: I have just had the pleasure of a meeting with Elie Wiesel to discuss our efforts to secure the peace in Bosnia. The citation on the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to Elie Wiesel nine years ago, describes him as a messenger to mankind. He is a passionate witness to humanity's capacity for the worst, and a powerful example of humanity's capacity for the best.

Throughout his life, he has been an advocate for peace and human dignity and the duty we owe to one another, and I'd like to ask him to say just a few words about the decisions that are before our country and the work of peace in Bosnia.

MR. WIESEL: Mr. President, it is with a great sense of pride and pleasure that I came to support your decision. I believe it is right, I believe it is honorable. Two years ago or so, when we both spoke at the very important event, the opening of the Holocaust Memorial Museum, I left my prepared remarks and appealed to you, to your humanity, which I know is profound, to do something, anything, to stop the killing, the bloodshed, the violence, the hatred, the massacre in former Yugoslavia.

I know how concerned you were. I know you tried. You tried very hard, trying to influence the European nations, the allies, the United Nations. And what you are doing now will be remembered in history, because it is intervention on the highest level and in its most noble form.

We in the United States represent a certain moral aspect of history. A great nation owes its greatness not only to its military power, but also to its moral consciousness, awareness. What would future generations say about us, all of us here in this land, if we do nothing?

After all, people were dying, people were killing each other, day after day. They stopped, thanks to your leadership. I know of no other world figure today who has done so much in the field of foreign affairs as you have, Mr. President. To send American men and women to preserve the peace is an act of courage and of decency, and I use the word advisedly—it's an act of morality, and that is why I am here with you today, Mr. President.

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**HANDOUT 2**

**EXCERPTED REMARKS BY AFRICAN AMERICAN LIBERATOR LEON BASS**

International Liberators Conference

Washington, D.C.

October 1981

But in the final analysis, my friends, if we want to avoid another Holocaust, if we want to make sure that this doesn't happen again, we have a personal responsibility to do something about it. I know it's nice to say that you're going to give a large sum of money to the NAACP or you're going to give a large sum of money to B'nai Brith. But that's the easy way out.

... the tough part of the program is when you walk out of here and you go back to where you live and where you work. When you're on the job and your boss tells an anti-Semitic joke, do you laugh...? When you're sitting around the bridge table and somebody talks about the dirty niggers or the spics moving in down the street, do you sit there quietly and never say anything? If so, you are contributing to another Holocaust.

It was James Baldwin who said, "God gave man the rainbow sign/No more water, the fire next time." You are throwing fuel on that fire when you keep your mouth shut.... Trying to love the unlovable is the challenge, my friends. When we ignore the disinherited, the dispossessed, and the poor among us, we are contributing to another Holocaust...

If we're going to survive, if we're going to make this world a better place, when we leave here we'll take the message back with us. We'll move out into the forefront where the battle happens to be waging and that's with the disinherited and the dispossessed. I would like to remember again the words of James Baldwin who said,

Either we love one another  
Or the seas will engulf us  
And the light will go out.

From *The Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps 1945: Eyewitness Accounts of the Liberators* (Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Council, 1987).