

Eli Rubenstein Concluding Remarks,  
M.S. St. Louis Apology  
Wed. Nov. 7, 2018, Ottawa

Michael Levitt Introduction:

*Thank you so much to the Gordon family for being here and sharing your thoughts with us. The generational nature of what we've achieved here cannot be overlooked, and it's very much at the core of what our next guest, Eli Rubenstein, does as the national director of The March of the Living. The March of the Living is an absolutely inspirational program, and has at its root, Holocaust education through the experience of returning to Auschwitz. Every year, hundreds of Jewish students travel with mentors, with survivors, back to Poland, back to Auschwitz. I just want to acknowledge the efforts that Eli Rubenstein has done in growing this program. And the absolute significance it has in teaching our next generation the importance and understanding that what has happened in our past shapes our future.*

*Ladies and gentlemen, Eli Rubenstein.*

Just before I came into this room, I asked a survivor I knew from Toronto what today was like for him. He said that, "this was the most wonderful gesture a government could ever express", and this was echoed by a number of other survivors I spoke to. What a mitzvah, what a good deed was done here today by our government!

Eli Wiesel, of blessed memory, once said: Many people die twice. Once when they die, and once again when they are forgotten. So thank you, dear Prime Minister, and indeed all our political leaders, for making sure that the over 250 victims of the St Louis, many who perished in Auschwitz/Birkenau, Sobibor, and other places, are never forgotten, that they don't die a second death.

And thank you to all of you here today who took part in this truly historic moment.

I would now like you all to rise and join me in chanting the Mourner's Kaddish for the victims of the St Louis, and so many other victims.

And after we conclude the Kaddish, please join me in singing the last line of the Kaddish, Oseh Shalom, the classic Jewish request in prayer, for peace.

Please join me.