

Wiesel

SELDOM HAVE I OBSERVED THE SENSE OF EXPECTANCY AND PLEASURE THAT HAS BEEN SHOWN IN THIS COMMUNITY IN RESPONSE TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ELIE WIESEL WOULD BE WITH US AT FIU THIS SPRING.

ELIE WIESEL EXPRESSES IN HIS PERSON AND IN HIS LEGEND THE QUINTESSENCE OF WHAT UNIVERSITIES ARE ABOUT. ONE OF HIS MOST FAMOUS BOOKS IS CALLED NIGHT. IN THAT AND IN HIS OTHER DISTINGUISHED WRITING, HE HAS FOCUSED LIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING ON SOME OF THE MOST COMPLEX AND SHADOWY AREAS OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE. HE IS A PROLIFIC PRODUCER -- OF NOVELS, POEMS, PLAYS, AS WELL AS OF ESSAYS, WHICH DEAL WITH VERY SERIOUS MATTERS.

Dr. WIESEL, WHO CURRENTLY HOLDS THE PRESTIGIOUS ANDREW W. MELLON CHAIR IN THE HUMANITIES AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY, HAS WRITTEN OVER 20 BOOKS AND SEVERAL PLAYS, AND LECTURED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. HIS DISTINGUISHED CAREER HAS BEEN MARKED BY NUMEROUS LITERARY AWARDS IN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES, AND HE HAS BEEN PRESENTED HONORARY DEGREES BY YALE UNIVERSITY, THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND BOSTON UNIVERSITY, AMONG MANY OTHERS. HE WAS APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER AS HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL COUNCIL.

BECAUSE HE SURVIVED THE DARKEST OF HUMAN NIGHTS, FORTY YEARS AGO, AND BECAUSE HE HAS MADE THAT TRANSITION FROM DEATH TO LIFE MEANINGFUL FOR MILLIONS, THIS UNIVERSITY IS HONORED INDEED TO HAVE HIM WITH US. IT IS ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE THAT ELIE WIESEL SHOULD BE HERE AT THIS TIME. HIS PRESENCE GIVES A NEW DIMENSION TO OUR WORK IN PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

IN THE SIX LECTURES WHICH WILL COMPRISE HIS COURSE HERE, AND *Through*

- 2 -

INSPIRED
THE *INSPIRED* COUNSELING WHICH HE WILL GIVE HIS STUDENTS AND HAS ALREADY GIVEN US, WE EXPECT TO *materially* ADVANCE THE PROSPECT OF HAVING AT THIS UNIVERSITY BY THE END OF ITS SECOND DECADE, A CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL MORALITY AND JUSTICE. HIS CONCERN FOR THESE TRANSCENDENTAL ISSUES, AND HIS GENIUS FOR TRANSLATING EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTION INTO WORDS THAT GLOW WITH TRUTH ARE REASON ENOUGH TO HAVE HIM AT THIS CEREMONY **THIS MORNING.**