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Address to the Anti-Defamation League  
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Thank you, Lawrence (Rosenbloom). Thank you very much for those kind words.

And thank you, Ed Ahnert, a good friend and colleague for a long time, whose leadership of the ExxonMobil Foundation is touching lives, and making a positive difference wherever ExxonMobil operates, which is almost everywhere in the world.

Thanks also to my good friend, Larry Schoenbrun, one of the preeminent lawyers in Dallas, and a man whose keen intellect and biting wit are only surpassed by his selfless service to our community.

If you've never received a call from Larry asking you for money or some other help for some worthy cause, raise your hands and we can fix that right here tonight.

And thank you Rabbi David Stern – for those beautiful words of invocation and for your outstanding leadership of my own Temple Emanu-El.

I am deeply honored to share in the legacy of an award named for Henry Cohn – a man whose lifetime of generosity and civic mindedness remains an inspiring example for all of us.

Henry and his wife, Linkie, have been major benefactors to an amazing number of worthy causes and institutions in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and – in fact – all across Texas.

By their own account, Henry and Linkie have been guided and inspired by the Talmudic commandment: “You don't need to finish the task, but you're not free from starting it.”

Well, the Cohns have started some great things, and with magnificent results.

Henry and Linkie, thank you.

Thank you for what you continue to mean to the ADL, to Dallas, and to this country.

I must also tell you how flattered I am that Deedie Rose is chairing this event tonight.

Anyone who has had the pleasure of knowing Deedie Rose will know at least one reason why this dinner has already been so successful.

The contributions that she's made to the cultural institutions of Dallas – and I'm talking both financial and just plain hard work – have already made her a legend in her own time here in Dallas.

I have come to know Deedie as a member of the Board of the Dallas Theater Center, which she chairs.

Together with Sarah Warnecke, Richard Hamburger and a very dedicated staff, Deedie brings magic to the stage of the Kalita Humphrey's Theatre.

And I suggest if you haven't already subscribed to what's turning out to be a great season at the Theater Center, you can still get a discount package on great seats for the next three plays – including the oddly named, but absolutely hilarious, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* – which opens this Wednesday.

Deedie, thank you for serving as dinner chair this evening, and thank you for all that you and Rusty mean to Dallas.

It's really you who should be honored here tonight.

I must say that while I'm, of course, very grateful to be honored with this award, I'm also a bit embarrassed.

I never would have imagined that my involvement in Dallas would be seen as meriting this kind of attention.

But I also recall Prime Minister Golda Meier's words of caution to a visiting diplomat: "Don't be so humble," she said. "You're not that great."

But it is characteristic of the way this town operates.

I am especially happy that Helen and our children, Jonathan and Jolene, are here tonight with our daughter-in-law, Alisha and our son-in-law, Jayson.

As our kids were growing up, we lived in a lot of places here in the United States and around the world.

But we have never lived in a community as warm and welcoming to newcomers as Dallas.

I remember that just after we arrived in this area, I said to Helen, "How come they're all being so nice to us -- what do they want?"

And of course the answer was nothing at all.

Folks just wanted to make us feel welcome and comfortable in our new community – and they did.

And now, who would have believed, after the nomadic life we have lived, that we would still be here 12 1/2 years later and that we'd be blessed with four Texan grandchildren.

Let me tell you – we're here to stay.

And Dallas is a city where it is easy for a newcomer to be allowed to get involved.

It's actually Helen who is always the first one to call the Federation or Temple to say, "We've just moved in. How can we help?"

Some of you probably know of Helen's own strong personal commitment to kids and education and the work she has done in Dallas – first for the Wise Academy and now for the soon-to-be launched Golda Meir high school.

In every sense, I share this award with Helen tonight.

Helen, thank you.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention another organization that I believe deserves some credit, and that's the company I work for -- ExxonMobil.

Like many of you, I've got a full-time job. I've got plenty to do.

Yet, I am fortunate to work for a civic-minded company that encourages its employees to volunteer their time and energy.

And of course, that's one of the reasons that I've been able to be active in the community.

Here, in Dallas, I have been privileged to be involved with Dallas CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocates – which represents the interests of abused and neglected children in protective care.

Our city is truly blessed to have caring and talented people like Beverly Levy and her small staff of volunteers who work tirelessly to help these beautiful and defenseless children.

I have also been fortunate to serve with Tom Codd and Jim Howard at the Dallas Zoological Society, another treasure that sustains and enriches the life of our community

And I am truly honored to work with Elly Dlin and Mike Schiff on the executive committee of the Dallas Holocaust Center, where, each year, some 30-40,000 North Texas school kids come to learn about the evil of hatred and prejudice.

For each new generation, the values and principles we cherish don't just happen on their own.

The lessons of history and the principles of our free society are truths that must be taught to our children.

And that is why the work of the Holocaust Center is so vital. But really, this evening is about the ADL.



And while I'm in the spotlight here tonight, we're really all here to honor the struggle against discrimination and hatred that is the vital work of the Anti-Defamation League.

Helen's parents came to the United States around 1920 to escape the pogroms in Russia.

My parents came here in 1937, to escape from Nazi Germany.

Their stories were similar to what some of you here tonight could tell – stories of escape from persecution, families torn apart, and from almost unbelievable forms of evil.

My father was fired from the company he was working for because he was Jewish.

He could see that there wouldn't be much of a future there with the tremendous anti-Semitism that had begun.

And so, somehow, he managed to get to the U.S. – then as now the beacon of liberty, and justice and tolerance.

My aunt and my grandmother were sent to a concentration camp, and through an absolute miracle lived to see freedom after the war.

But others did not, and their memories are forever etched in our minds.

Even as we vow, "never again," we remind ourselves of the terrible price that is paid whenever evil is met by silence.

Someone said that all it takes for evil to flourish is for good people to remain silent.

But, in confronting evil, we must never remain silent.

And that is exactly what the ADL is all about.

I belong to the ADL because of the role that it plays in educating people – especially new generations of young people – about the existence of hate and the ways that it needs to be confronted.

I belong to the ADL because it testifies to the human and civic values that we all share as Americans.

These values are part of our legacy.

They are part of our strength.

They are also part of what makes us so admired – even envied – around the world.

Today's hatemongers may be small in numbers and lacking in political power, but they still cause emotional pain, physical injury, property destruction, and even death.

They can also tear apart the social fabric of our country and our cherished ideals of individual freedom, mutual respect, and equal treatment for all.

The mission of the ADL is to expose, and combat, the purveyors of hatred in our midst, and to remind us of the cost of inaction and moral indecision.

Time and again, the ADL has demonstrated its effectiveness in warning of the dangers to the innocent, especially when the good and the innocent fail to band together to oppose hate.

Since it started in 1913, the ADL has remained the world's leading organization in fighting for religious and ethnic tolerance, through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice, and bigotry – of all kinds.

I am proud to associate myself with the Anti-Defamation League and its mission, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for this wonderful award.

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