

Presentation of the Medal of the City to David Rosenberg  
Remarks of Mme Brigitte FOURÉ, Mayor of Amiens  
Jules Verne Room, City Hall, Amiens, France 80 000

Tuesday, the 8th of February 2022

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be here today to present the medal of the City to David Rosenberg.

One of my predecessors, Gilles de Robien, liked to say that in the word “Amiens” is the word “ami” (friend).

And David Rosenberg is most assuredly a friend of our city.

I particularly have in mind the exhibit “To be a Jew in the Somme, 1940-45”, which we were privileged to see at the Citadel campus in 2019. You, David, have continued your attachment to the Departement since the days when, as a student, you wrote a thesis on Protestantism in Amiens!

The presentation of this medal to you is full of emotion for all of us and reminds us first, that there are, in the life of a nation, moments which wound the memory and the idea that one has of one’s country,

When, because of your work, we remember the victims of the Shoah, we honor them and triumph over their executioners who would condemn them to oblivion.

To remember is thus to be there, every day, but also to take action.

It is important to restore a part of the history and the soul of Amiens and of Picardy, as you have done.

Preserving and valuing our heritage and particularly our Jewish heritage makes all the sense in the world in Amiens.

We have to take care of our heritage. That is the definition of culture: we are a chain of witnesses, as Alain Finkielkraut has said.

The Jewish presence is a constitutive part of the culture of France. It also carries

a message in these current, troubled times. Judaism is at home in France! Judaism bears within it the spiritual and republican values proper to our country.

It bears the heritage of a France that is generous and open-minded, whose vocation is to spread abroad the spirit of the Enlightenment, of

the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. But it also bears the heritage of a humanist and close-knit Europe, creating new frontiers, and dispelling the last outbursts and remaining traces of the murderous hatreds of the past..

Finally, I don't forget, dear David Rosenberg, that you are an American.

And, since the United States appeared on the world stage, our two peoples, the American people and the French people, have always been friends. The challenges in the history of our two countries have reinforced this friendship.

In difficult times, America and France have fought for the liberty of the other.

The United States and France are faithful to the memory of our common history.

Our duty is to be faithful to the blood that our children have shed on both sides of the Atlantic, in common wars.

But the United States and France are not only two nations who faithfully remember what they have accomplished together in the past.

The United States and France are two nations who are faithful to the same ideal, who defend the same principles, and who believe in the same values.

That is why the work that you have done in remembering the victims of the Shoah is of such importance.

It is in this context that you have created the site Jews of the Somme –Juifs de la Somme, based on your research.

The fruit of this research is also accessible on the site of the Departmental Archives of the Somme. There you lay out the circumstances of the roundup of Jews in January 1944 that we memorialize each year in Amiens. And here I would like to evoke the memory of Cecile Redlich, a 15 year old girl from Amiens, who lost her life at Auschwitz-Birkenau after this roundup and for whom the street next to the former synagogue is now named.

Your internet site, developed with Lydia Rosenberg, constitutes a reference for all pedagogic action for the education of the young people of the Somme.

As Maréchal Foch said "because a man without memory is a man without life, a people without memory is a people without a future," dear David Rosenberg, Thank you!

Thank you for your work of memory for future generations.

Thank you for your friendship toward our city.

Thank you for your humanity and your nobility of soul.

And it is with immense joy that I will present in a few moments, in the name of the women and men of Amiens, the medal of the city.

Long live the Republic! Long live France! Long live Europe and long live Franco-American friendship!

End

*Translated from the French by Davant Dodson-Rosenberg and David Rosenberg, Pittsburgh, April 20, 2022*