

**THANK YOU FOR THAT INTRODUCTION, MARIO ERNESTO, AND THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO BE PART OF THIS SPECIAL NIGHT.**

**GOOD EVENING, EVERYONE.**

**IT'S REALLY A PLEASURE TO BE HERE WITH YOU FOR TONIGHT'S PRESENTATION OF "HARBOR OF BROKEN GLASS."**

**AND IT'S REALLY AN HONOR TO BE IN THE COMPANY OF OUR TWO VERY SPECIAL GUESTS: JUDITH STEELE AND EVA WEINER.**

**LADIES, WE ARE HERE TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE YOU, AND REMEMBER ALL THE OTHER PASSENGERS OF THE M.S. ST. LOUIS.**

**UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T CHANGE THE PAST.**

**I CAN'T CHANGE ALL OF THE HARDSHIP THAT YOU, YOUR FAMILIES, AND FELLOW JEWISH REFUGEES ENDURED DURING ONE OF THE UGLIEST AND CRUELEST TIMES IN OUR HISTORY.**

**I CAN'T CHANGE THE CORRUPTION, DISCRIMINATION AND HEARTLESSNESS THAT PREVENTED YOU FROM BEING WELCOMED TO THIS COUNTRY IN JUNE OF 1939.**

**BUT, WHAT I CAN DO TONIGHT, IS OFFER YOU A WARM WELCOME – THE KIND OF WELCOME THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED SO MANY YEARS AGO.**

**AND TONIGHT, I WELCOME YOU ON BEHALF OF 2.7 MILLION PEOPLE WHO ARE SO HONORED TO HAVE YOU HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.**

**YOU ARE AMONG FRIENDS TONIGHT. AND I SAY THAT WITH SINCERITY BECAUSE I WHEN I READ YOUR STORIES BEFORE I WENT TO SLEEP LAST NIGHT, I FELT A SENSE OF KINSHIP.**

**JUDITH, I KNOW THAT YOU WERE ON THE ST. LOUIS AS AN INFANT. AND THAT WHEN YOUR FAMILY WAS DENIED ENTRY INTO CUBA, YOU ENDED UP IN FRANCE AND WERE SOON SEPARATED FROM YOUR PARENTS. I KNOW YOU NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN.**

**EVA, I KNOW THAT YOU WERE ALSO AN INFANT ABOARD THE ST. LOUIS, AND THAT AFTER YOU WERE TURNED AWAY FROM CUBA AND THE COAST OF FLORIDA, YOU AND YOUR PARENTS WAITED IN A LONDON BOMB SHELTER FOR WORLD WAR II TO END.**

**FLEEING GENOCIDE AND PERSECUTION IS AN UNFORTUNATE THREAD IN THE NARRATIVE OF OUR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY.**

**MY STORY AS A CUBAN-AMERICAN IS DIFFERENT. AND I CAN'T IMAGINE THE ATROCITIES THAT MANY ESCAPING NAZI GERMANY SUFFERED.**

**BUT I CAN IMAGINE WHAT IT MUST FEEL LIKE TO BE TURNED AWAY.**

**AND THAT'S WHY I WANT TO OFFICIALLY GIVE YOU THE WELCOME YOU DESERVE.**

**SO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE JOIN ME IN GIVING A ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO JUDITH AND EVA!**

**THANK YOU AGAIN FOR INVITING ME TONIGHT.**

**SHALOM AND L'CHAIM!**

