

Expression of Condolence for Max Eisen by Toronto City Council

Moved by: Councillor James Pasternak

Seconded by: Councillor Brad Bradford

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Max Eisen on Saturday, July 7, 2022, at the age of 93.

Tibor "Max" Eisen was born on March 15, 1929 in Moldavan ad Bodvou, a small Slovak town annexed by Hungary during the Second World War. In 1944, as Jews living in occupied Hungary, 15-year-old Max and his family were captured by the Nazis, and deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland.

At Auschwitz, Max Eisen lost both his parents, all three of his siblings and most of the rest of his large family. He witnessed tragedy heaped on unspeakable tragedy, including getting sent to the hospital after having his head bludgeoned by the butt of an SS Guard's rifle, and there being ordered to pry gold fillings from the teeth of dead Jews.

Through his resilience, the kindness of his fellow prisoners, and sheer luck, Max Eisen managed to survive until the camp was liberated on May 6, 1945. Max Eisen would immigrate to Canada in 1949 and devoted his life to speaking out against the Holocaust, antisemitism, and hate-related violence, working with organizations like the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre and the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

In 2017, Max Eisen shared a detailed account of his experiences during the Holocaust in his memoir, *By Chance Alone*, winning the CBC's Canada Reads competition in 2019.

Max Eisen played a key role in the conviction of Reinhold Hanning and Oskar Groening, two former guards at Auschwitz guard, sitting as a witness to the prosecution in both trials. Contrary to their testimonies, Max Eisen stressed that these men did indeed have a choice in their actions.

In the last decade of his life, in recognition for his contributions as a speaker, educator, activist, and author, Max Eisen would receive Honorary Doctorates from Trent University, Western University, the University of Saskatchewan, and the Law Society of Ontario, and be appointed to to the Order of Canada on December 29, 2021.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Max Eisen.

July 19, 2022