

Dear Mrs. Strummer,

My name is _____, and I am sixteen years old. Though I have twice heard you speak, I am certain that you will not remember me; I have done nothing in particular to distinguish myself from the multitude of young people to whom you have delivered your vastly important message. Yet among the many speakers I have listened to in school and elsewhere, you, Mrs. Strummer, have truly made a difference. Your testimony has opened my eyes so that I have truly discovered myself and the world around me, and the course of my life is irreversibly changed.

The first time I heard you speak was at Annapolis, at the Board of Education building. For weeks after that I went through a trying period during which everything that I believed in...

my country, my religion, my heritage, my family ... was put to the test. I was depressed, lonely, at frightened, now that I knew that monsters do exist and disguise themselves as men. I came out of that state with my faith in America, in God, and in Jesus intact. My faith in humanity - in Mankind - is no more.

That loss has since been replaced by a resolve. I remember that you said that you work so hard and talk so long and do so very much because you owe your comrades. Mrs. Strummer you have given me an obligation. Because I have heard you, because I know that what you say is true, and because I know that there is a God, I am now responsible - I owe them as much as you do.

62 books sit under my bed. 62 books I have carried back and forth time and time and again. 62 books I have taken months to read and read again.

This is not a passing interest. This is not a fad. I am doing this because I must have knowledge - as much as I can possibly get. The survivors cannot live forever. I know that they will not always be here to tell the story. But it must not stop being told with the death of the last one. Someone must continue to tell the tale for them.

That is only a small part of the obligation that you have placed upon me. The Holocaust is the worst, but not the only atrocity committed by Man. The South African blacks, the American Indians, the Soviet Jews, the Armenian Christians, the Cambodians... all of these must be remembered. I think about them and I think about your comrades every day - and since I heard you speak I have never been able to say "I am cold" or "I am tired" or "I am hungry" or "I am thirsty", and I have no more

desire to be wealthy one day because now I see that I am one of the richest people on earth. I thank God for that, and I thank you for helping me to see that.

Besides thinking, I am also doing. Demonstrations, protests, articles, and announcements, field trips and charities, all of these are becoming commonplace in my life. I am starting now because I am young, I have lots of energy, and the sooner I start the more I will get done. And there is also a story that a good friend is helping me to create - but it is late now - I shall have to tell of it some other time.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you, Mrs. Strummer. You have opened my mind and shown me the path that I am to take and I thank you for it.
God bless you.