

# Ceremony Honoring Ethel Rosenberg on her Centenary

Press materials • September 28, 2015 • City Hall, New York City

*Ethel Rosenberg, nee Ethel Greenglass, was poor and lived on New York City's Lower East Side in the 1920s and 1930s where she excelled as a Seward Park High School student and dreamed of college. Her teachers considered her singing voice exceptional. She graduated three months before her 16th birthday but, unable to afford college, she took a clerical training course; and*

**WHEREAS:** *In 1935, at the age of 19, Ethel worked as a Clerk at the National New York Packing and Shipping Company, and, demonstrating great bravery, helped lead a strike for union recognition and a pay raise. The New York Times reported that "about 150 young women pickets moved in squads through the garment district... They lay on the pavement in front of trucks and dared the drivers to move"; and*

**WHEREAS:** *Ethel was fired and filed a claim for wrongful termination with the National Labor Relations Board, which found in her favor: "There is no allegation or evidence that she was not an efficient employee. The [company's] antagonism to Ethel Greenglass undoubtedly arose by virtue of the fact that she was active in organizing the Union." Ethel remained active in union organizing and used her singing talents to raise funds. While performing, she met Julius Rosenberg, whom she later married; and*

**WHEREAS:** *During World War II, Ethel joined the East Side Defense Council as its only full-time volunteer. It was the first such organization in the nation and became a model for others. She organized blood donation drives and gave speeches on the importance of the war effort. Her first son, Michael, was born during the war and her second son, Robert, was born after it ended; and*

**WHEREAS:** *In August 1950, Ethel was charged with Conspiracy to Commit Espionage. FBI documents reveal that chief prosecution witnesses David and Ruth Greenglass provided no evidence against Ethel Rosenberg in their initial confessions. The Greenglass's recently released Grand Jury testimony also excludes mention of Ethel's involvement. FBI documents show that members of the prosecution team determined that she should be convicted with a "stiff sentence" and be used as a "lever" to induce her husband to cooperate. After devising this strategy, Ruth and David Greenglass provided oral testimony against Ethel. The judge relied upon this new testimony to sentence Ethel to death. In 2001, David Greenglass admitted the testimony was false; and*


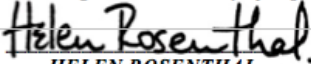
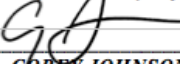
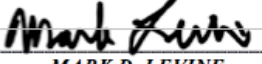
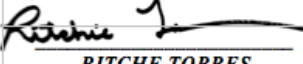

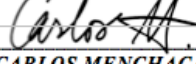
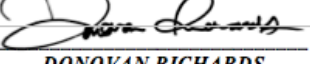
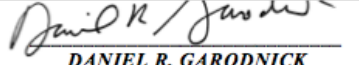
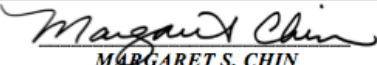
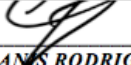
**WHEREAS:** *National Security Agency files indicate that the Soviet Union never gave Ethel Rosenberg a code name and that she, therefore, was not an active espionage agent. And that shortly before the Rosenbergs' executions, an FBI document listed questions to ask Julius Rosenberg if he cooperated. The FBI did not create such a list for Ethel and did not ask if Ethel was involved. Instead, one question on the list was: "Was your wife cognizant of your activities?" Since despite this, the government wrongfully executed Ethel Rosenberg; now therefore*

**BE IT KNOWN:** *That we, the undersigned Members of the New York City Council, honor the life and memory of*

## Ethel Rosenberg

*in observance of the 100th anniversary of her birth.*

*Signed this 28th day of September in the year Twenty Fifteen.*

 DANIEL DROMM Council Member, 25th District	 HELEN ROSENTHAL Council Member, 6th District	 COREY JOHNSON Council Member, 3rd District	 MARK D. LEVINE Council Member, 7th District
 RITCHIE TORRES Council Member, 15th District	 ROSIE MENDEZ Council Member, 2nd District	 CARLOS MENCHACA Council Member, 38th District	 DONOVAN RICHARDS Council Member, 31st District
 DANIEL R. GARODNICK Council Member, 4th District	 MARGARET S. CHIN Council Member, 1st District	 YDAMS RODRIGUEZ Council Member, 10th District	