

Mr. President, while our debates on various defense programs can be served by additional views, I think this new paper from the Congressional Budget Office has done more to create confusion than to contribute usefully to the debate. I urge Senators to keep its limitations in mind as they consider it.

QUEST FOR MIDEAST PEACE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I had the privilege of chairing a hearing of the Foreign Relations Committee on April 5 that examined the status of U.S. efforts to resolve still open questions of compensation and restitution arising from the tragedy of the Holocaust, and that looked broadly at the persistent phenomenon of anti-Semitism that inspired and enabled that monstrous crime.

Extraordinary witnesses appeared before the Committee—led by Dr. Elie Wiesel, who called on us and all civilized men and women to stand firm against the dark forces of bigotry and other hatreds, and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Stuart Eizenstat, who described the efforts of the United States and other countries to finally and squarely confront with painful truths and achieve some level of justice for the Holocaust's victims and its survivors.

One subject that was analyzed for the Committee in great detail was the current reach and impact of anti-Semitism, and I feel particularly indebted to David Harris, Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee, for his thoughtful and comprehensive testimony on this grave matter. This presentation reviewed not only the scourge of anti-semitism in Europe but the increasingly troubling incidence of this form of bigotry in the Arab world.

At the same time that countries across the Middle East are engaged in a peace process guided by Washington that promises a new era in relations between Arabs and Israelis, old anti-Jewish enmities are too often tolerated, or even fanned, by important institutions in the Arab world. Anti-Jewish and anti-Israel propaganda of the most grotesque nature is commonly available—on the newsstands, in schools, in professional societies and political conferences—and almost universally tolerated, even by governments committed to pursuing peace.

As the American Jewish Committee asserted, this sanctioning of hatred against Israel and Jews in general, profoundly complicates the search for Middle East peace, fostering a climate in which compromise, accommodation, trust and understanding—on both sides—may be unattainable. This virulent hatred is simply incompatible with the search for peace, and it is the obligation of the region's leaders to act firmly against its continuing dissemination.

I am grateful that the American Jewish Committee distilled the essence of its testimony on this subject in an ad-

vertisement that ran on the Op-ed Page of the New York Times on Tuesday, April 11. I ask unanimous consent that the text of the AJC ad be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, April 11, 2000]
HATRED VERSUS PEACE

A comprehensive and durable Arab-Israeli peace requires more than signed agreements. What is needed are concrete steps to build a culture of peace.

As Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak takes bold and courageous initiatives to achieve a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, to withdraw Israeli forces from southern Lebanon, and to negotiate with Syria, hatred of Jews seethes in the Arab government-controlled media, and in many Arab schools, religious institutions, and professional societies.

Some recent examples:

The Palestinian Authority-appointed Islamic Mufti of Jerusalem last month publicly trivialized the Holocaust just before meeting with Pope John Paul II, echoing a view often published in newspaper articles and editorials across the Arab world.

Syrian textbooks are replete with anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, and open calls for the extermination of Jews.

Professional societies in Egypt and Jordan, countries formally at peace with Israel, prohibit contact with Israelis. The Jordanian Journalists' Association expelled one member for committing the "crime" of visiting Israel and compelled three others to sign an apology.

While Israeli diplomats originally invited to a University of Cairo conference on March 28 were turned away at the door, the Arab League, also meeting in the Egyptian capital, called for an immediate end to Jewish immigration to Israel.

The Palestinian Authority's official news outlets regularly assert that Israel is spreading viruses throughout the Arab world.

Arab media have depicted, in words and cartoons, Israeli Prime Minister Barak and Foreign Minister David Levy as Nazis.

Such virulent anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial in the Arab world must no longer be tolerated.

The spreading of hatred and the pursuit of peace cannot coexist. Which will it be? The fate of the region may depend on the answer.

SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, DIFFERENT OUTCOMES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week, as the one-year anniversary of the Columbine shooting approached, rumors of copycat violence prompted panic among teachers and students. Principals and administrators sensitive to such rumors heightened security by bringing in police protection and extra security guards. Other districts relied on parents and community volunteers to monitor school activity, and still others canceled classes altogether rather than suffer the fate of a school shooting, or even the threat of one.

For the most part, on the day the nation remembered Columbine, the rumors turned out to be just that—rumors. But the day did not go by without an act of copycat violence. The tragedy occurred, not here in the United States, but in Ottawa in the province of Ontario, Canada.

An article in the Ottawa Citizen describes the attack by a 15-year-old boy as one directly linked to the Columbine killings. The teen-age boy was apparently obsessed with the school massacre, and reportedly had photographs of the Columbine killers posted in his school locker. Students remember the accused counting down the days in eager anticipation of the exact moment Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold began their reign of terror.

In many ways, the student in Ottawa had similar experiences to those of Harris and Klebold. Classmates teased him because of his appearance. He felt depressed and suicidal. He longed to be noticed, and perhaps thought this act of violence would give him the notoriety he craved. And so, exactly one year and a few minutes after the Columbine massacre began, a boy in Ottawa picked up his backpack and pulled out his weapon.

Both scenarios seem similar but there is one critical difference between the now infamous April 20th act of violence in Littleton and the more recent one in Ottawa that garnered virtually no attention. That crucial, critical difference—the weapon.

Despite the Canadian boy's obsession with Columbine, his copycat crime was not carried out with an arsenal of semiautomatic guns, but with a kitchen knife. The weapon he pulled from his backpack caused great pain and anguish, but in the end, none of the five people he stabbed sustained any life-threatening injuries. By comparison, the Columbine rampage left fifteen dead and more than two dozen injured, some of whom still have fragments of ammunition lodged deep in their bodies.

The circumstances of these cases were similar, but the outcomes were different because one country successfully limits access to firearms among young people, and one does not. In Canada, citizens are subject to licensing and registration requirements and have limited access to handguns and certain assault weapons. In the United States, our gun laws are so riddled with loopholes a 15 year old can legally possess an assault rifle.

I've often made the point that Canadian children, who watch the same movies and television programs, and play with the same toys and video games, are far safer than their American counterparts. The key difference between these children is not morals, religion or family, the difference is access to guns.

How else can one explain that in 1997, the U.S. rate of death involving firearms was approximately 14 per 100,000, compared to Canada's rate of 4 per 100,000? In 1997, in my hometown of Detroit, there were 354 firearm homicides. In Windsor, the Canadian town that is across the river, there were only 4 firearm homicides for that same year. Accounting for population, Detroit's firearm homicide rate was 18 times higher than Windsor's.