

Vermont, we held a hearing to commemorate this milestone, to talk about our Nation's progress over the past half century, and how we must move forward if we are to live up to the ideals enumerated in the Constitution. My former colleague from the House and an American hero, Representative JOHN LEWIS, shared his recollections and his hopes for the future with us.

Today, however, it is with great sadness that I come to the Senate floor to talk about a rash of incidents involving the hanging of nooses in this country. These incidents are a painful reminder of just how far we have to go. I am introducing a Senate resolution that expresses the sense of the Senate that: the hanging of nooses is a horrible act when used for the purpose of intimidation, and which under certain circumstances can be a criminal act; that it should be thoroughly investigated by Federal, State, and local law enforcement authorities; and that any criminal violations should be vigorously prosecuted. The House of Representatives unanimously passed a similar resolution, H. Res. 826, on December 5, and I ask the Senate to take the same action.

American students are being targeted by this epidemic of hate crimes, many of which have occurred after the Jena Six incident arose. Just this year, nooses were discovered hung on the campuses of the University of Maryland, Indiana State University, the United States Coast Guard Academy, East Carolina University, North Carolina State, Columbia University, Louisiana State University, and Purdue.

Nooses are being found in elementary and high schools, in Illinois, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and New York. And so we have a new generation of children who are growing up with the same symbols of hate that proliferated more than 100 years ago.

Our Nation's first responders are targeted with these symbols of hate: firefighters in Jacksonville, FL, and police departments in Hempstead and Brooklyn, NY. Nooses have been displayed in hospitals in Pittsburgh, PA, and Orangeburg, NY. Finally, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed more than 30 lawsuits for hanging nooses in the workplace since 2001, and stated that it observed "a disturbing national trend of increased racial harassment cases involving hangman's nooses in the workplace."

Let us remember the chilling history of the United States on this subject. The hanging of nooses and lynching was first used to punish African slaves as early as the 17th century and was still commonplace in the United States until the 1960s civil rights movement. An estimated 5,000 people were lynched in the United States—roughly 70 percent of whom were African-Americans—between the 1880s and 1960s.

Mr. President, the situation is even more dire than most Americans imagine. The Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project counted 844

active hate groups in the United States in 2006.

Hate crimes' tentacles reach far beyond the intended targets. They bring a chill to entire neighborhoods and create a sense of fear, vulnerability, and insecurity in our communities. They poison the well of our democracy and strike at the very heart of the American spirit.

Hate crimes are un-American. They cannot be tolerated. When individuals are targeted and attacked because of who they are, entire communities suffer, we are all diminished by it. I call on the Senate today to condemn the recent spate of noose hangings and urge vigorous Federal, State, and local investigation and prosecution of criminal violations.

#### REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF CONFERENCE REPORTS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to notify all Senators that the Committee on Rules and Administration adopted Regulations Governing the Public Availability of Conference Reports, effective December 7, 2007.

These regulations were promulgated pursuant to Public Law 110-81, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007.

I ask unanimous consent that the regulations be printed in the RECORD.

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

#### REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF CONFERENCE REPORTS

(Adopted by the Committee on Rules and Administration, United States Senate, Effective December 7, 2007)

1. Section 511 (b)(1) of Public Law 110-81, enacted on September 14, 2007, authorizes the Committee on Rules and Administration to promulgate regulations implementing the requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XXVIII of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

2. Under the direction of the Committee on Rules and Administration, the Government Printing Office shall create and maintain a publicly accessible website that shall make available conference committee reports.

3. The Government Printing Office shall affix a time stamp to each conference report noting the date and time the report was made available to the public on the website. The Government Printing Office shall also notify, in writing or by e-mail, designated staff of the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of the date and time the report was posted on the website. The 48-hour period of public availability of a conference report prior to a vote on the adoption of the report, required by Section 511 (b)(1) of P.L. 110-81, shall commence on the date and time of the time stamp, unless there is an earlier public posting on a Congressionally authorized website.

4. The Government Printing Office shall provide public notification of this website through communications with the Library of Congress and the Federal Depository Library system.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

• Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, today is Human Rights Day. Fifty-nine years ago today, thanks in large measure to the tireless leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The principles encompassed in the declaration are uniquely rooted in the American tradition, beginning with our founding documents. Yet the declaration also wove together a remarkable variety of political, religious, and cultural perspectives and traditions. The United States and the United Kingdom championed civil liberties. The French representative on the committee helped devise the structure of the declaration. India added the prohibition on discrimination. China stressed the importance of family and reminded U.N. delegates that every right carried with it companion duties. Today should be a day of celebration, a day when we hail the universality of these core principles, which are both beacons to guide us and the foundations for building a more just and stable world.

The Universal Declaration was a radical document in its time, and its passage required courageous leadership from political leaders. Even though no country could have been said to be in full compliance with its provisions, including the United States where Jim Crow still prevailed, all U.N. member states committed themselves to promoting, protecting, and respecting fundamental human rights. Although Franklin Delano Roosevelt did not live to see the enactment of the historic declaration, it enshrined his "four freedoms"—freedom from want, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom from fear. Individuals in the United States and everywhere else were entitled, simply by virtue of being human, to physical and economic security. The declaration was born of the recognition, in the words of one human rights scholar, that "what is pain and humiliation for you is pain and humiliation for me."

Anniversaries are a good time to examine how faithful we have been to our own aspirations—to ask ourselves how well we are measuring up, to assess whether our practice lives up to our promise. We in the United States enjoy tremendous freedoms, but we also carry a special responsibility—the responsibility of being the country so many people in the world look to, just as they did in Mrs. Roosevelt's day, for human rights leadership.

Today, on this anniversary, we must acknowledge both bad news and good news. The bad news is that for nearly seven years, President Bush has ignored Franklin Roosevelt's wise counsel about the corrosive effects of fear. Indeed, instead of urging us to reject fear, he has stoked false fear and undermined our values.

Wounded by a horrific terrorist attack, we were warned that Saddam Hussein—a man who had nothing to do