ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise to make a statement on a matter that troubles me deeply. I do so with considerable reluctance.

It concerns a good friend of the United States, a country that for twenty years has been one of the bedrooks upon which the search of peace in the Middle East has rested. Here I speak about the Arab Republic of Egypt. I am loathe to bring to this floor anything that mars the image of the country that produced a leader of the courage and vision of Anwar Sadat.

I am told that the time is never right for such a statement. This is, as the experts always say, a "critical moment in the Middle East," a "turning point," or a "cross-roads." A wrong word here and a misplaced gesture there, I am told, and the pendulum may swing from tense confrontation. Well, they may be correct. But then the time may never be right to speak out.

The wrong that has been committed in Egypt on a daily basis is one with which we in the West sadly have far too much experience. Indeed, it is a wrong that mars our history at its very roots and is something that we can never work too hard to remove from our thoughts and our consciousness. But because I know how far we have come in ridding this curse from our minds and hearts, and because I have come to learn how much it has become daily fare in the newspapers, airwaves, and pulpits of Egypt, I have put aside my reluctance to speak out on this issue today.

The issue is anti-Semitism. I am not speaking of critiques of Israeli policy, but a resurgence of acerbic anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. I am speaking of the coarsest sort of hate. Jews, the kind of hatred that pollutes the mind, infects the soul and ensures that peace remains stone cold.

Caricatures of Jews that could have been lifted directly from the pages of Der Sturmer seem to have been transplanted directly into the leading Egyptian newspapers; accusations of far-fetched Jewish conspiracies that are grotesque, stories that are lurid, articles that are filled with nothing but hate, loathing and intolerance. I have a long catalogue of vile statements, pictures, cartoons, and articles, but I will not sully the reputation of this chamber in reciting them to you today. I will, however, request inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of selections from several major Egyptian newspapers in recent months. These media outlets are all state-owned, pro-government newspapers.

It is a sad reality that anti-Semitism exists in many parts of the globe, alongside its first cousins of racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance. And I am the first to admit that as a nation we do not have clean hands here. But what separates our experience from the terrible form of anti-Semitism that we see in Egypt today is that we denounce it from the secular and religious pulpits of our society. We give it no sanction and no currency in public life. And we fight it wherever it rears its ugly head.

Unfortunately, in Egypt the opposite seems to be the rule. Some of the vilest forms of anti-Semitic literature are published not in the sensationalist opposition press but in the major newspapers owned and operated by the Egyptian leaders who either dismiss the numerous examples of anti-Semitism as the stuff of far-left or far-right fringe groups or rush to hide behind the Four Word Safe Haven of "freedom of the press." It is disappointing that Egyptian leaders do not take to the airwaves, opinion pages or pulpits of their country to denounce anti-Semitism and condemn those who would traffic in hate.

It is particularly disappointing that Egyptian leaders do not take a stand against this hatred because of its history and its role. Egypt is a leader in the Arab world, which affords her enormous influence. Egypt has been a brave leader in the pursuit of a peace that, on this issue, has sadly lost its moral compass. Two generations after the Holocaust and the founding of Israel, I, for one, can no longer sit idly by as I watch a new generation of Middle Easterners grow up inheriting an ideology of hate. Nor can I sit idly by as we sanctuaries in our public life. And we give it no sanction and no currency in public life. And we fight it wherever it rears its ugly head.

Therefore, I believe that there needs to be a clear, unequivocal and systematic effort by the Government of Egypt to repudiate the purveyors of anti-Semitic hatred, to build a culture of tolerance on which the prospect of real peace can flourish.

As I said at the outset, I rise today with extreme reluctance. I want to be clear that this is not an issue regarding the freedom of the press in Egypt; rather, it is a call to action. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending a message to our friends in Egypt that such ugly and despicable anti-Semitism rhetoric must be repudiated officially and strongly at every level.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, April 3, 2001, the Federal debt stood at $5,756,629,476,462. Five trillion, seven hundred sixty-seven billion, three hundred sixty-seven million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand, nine hundred forty-two dollars and forty-six cents.

One year ago, April 3, 2000, the Federal debt stood at $5,756,629,476,462. Five trillion, seven hundred sixty-seven billion, three hundred sixty-seven million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand dollars.

Five years ago, April 3, 1996, the Federal debt stood at $5,135,691,000,000. Five trillion, one hundred thirty-five billion, six hundred ninety-one million.

Ten years ago, April 3, 1991, the Federal debt stood at $3,470,646,000,000. Three trillion, four hundred seventy-six billion, six hundred forty-six million.

Fifteen years ago, April 3, 1986, the Federal debt stood at $2,021,705,000,000. Two trillion, seventy-one billion, seven hundred five million.

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