

ESCALATING ANTI-SEMITIC  
VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

MAY 22, 2002

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# ESCALATING ANTI-SEMITIC VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2002

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# ESCALATING ANTI-SEMITIC VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

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MAY 22, 2002

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
WASHINGTON, DC

The Commission met in Room 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, at 10:05 a.m., the Hon. Christopher H. Smith, Co-Chairman, presiding.

Commissioners present: Hon. Christopher H. Smith, Co-Chairman; Hon. George V. Voinovich; Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin.

Witnesses present: Dr. Shimon Samuels, Director for International Liaison, Simon Weisenthal Center—Paris; Mark B. Levin, Executive Director, NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia; Alexandra Arriaga, Director of Government Relations, Amnesty International USA; Rabbi Andrew Baker, Director, International Jewish Affairs, American Jewish Committee; Kenneth Jacobson, Senior Associate National Director, International Affairs Division, Anti-Defamation League.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. SMITH. The hearing will come to order.

I want to thank our very distinguished panel for being here this morning. We will be joined shortly by several Senators and House members—members of the Commission—who have indicated that they will be joining us for this very important hearing.

Ladies and gentlemen, the recent increase of anti-Semitic violence in Europe is of great concern to members of this Commission and it is of great concern to Members of the United States Congress.

Over the past month, Europe has experienced a significant rise in vandalism against Jewish cemeteries, synagogues and cultural property, as well as mob assaults, fire bombings and gunfire. From the United Kingdom through much of Europe to Eurasia, anti-Semitic violence has emerged to challenge our deeply held values of equality and civil society, and this sharp escalation of brutality is particularly alarming in light of Europe's troubling past.

Unlike the prejudices against minority religious groups that is spreading through Europe, intolerance of Jews is based on more than just religion. Anti-Semitism is not necessarily based on the hatred of the Judaic faith, but of Jewish people themselves. Consequently, the resurfacing of these xenophobic attitudes and acts of violence is something that cannot be ignored by our European friends or the United States.

The participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], including the United States, have enumerated a clear position on anti-Semitism, responding to the region's past

history and future concerns. In fact, in 1990 the Copenhagen Concluding Document—was the first internationally agreed condemnation of anti-Semitism. It declared that all participating States of the OSCE “unequivocally condemn anti-Semitism,” and would take effective measures to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence.

While inconceivable that any OSCE State would promote blatantly anti-Semitic policies in response to the recent spate of violence, not all governments reacted with appropriate timeliness or clear condemnatory language. Unfortunately, when governments fail to respond quickly or adequately to attacks or are silent in the face of violence, an implicit statement is made.

The silence concerning anti-Semitic attacks was contrasted with the fierce condemnation by certain European governments to actions taken by Israel. This rhetoric, combined with ever-increasing violence and government inaction, justifiably left a sense of isolation reminiscent of an earlier dark age.

Today most OSCE States have engaged the issue taking appropriate steps to deter further violence through public statements, prosecutions and police protection of Jewish property. Yet taken as a whole, the atmosphere of tolerance in many European countries has been, indeed, damaged.

As a result, the change in atmospherics further fed the latent monster of anti-Semitism. For example, in France and the Netherlands, politicians promoting aggressive nationalism has fared well in recent elections. Neo-Nazi skinhead propaganda and violence in Russia and former Soviet republics have reached alarming levels. The rise of the extreme right is a startling reminder that the sins of intolerance and xenophobia remain prevalent in some circles.

While anti-Semitism still lurks from Europe’s past, hostility toward Jews has also erupted from second-generation Arabs in France, Belgium and Germany. A case in point concerns two Jewish students from my own home state of New Jersey. Upon leaving prayer at a Berlin synagogue, these two Orthodox Jews had the misfortune of walking into a protest against Israel and against U.S. policy with respect to the Palestinians. When the two students were approached by several protesters and asked if they were Jews, they answered yes. They were assaulted in the street, in the heart of one of Berlin’s most fashionable districts. Thankfully, their injuries were minor, but German authorities have still been unable to apprehend the attackers.

Clearly, all OSCE-participating States, including the United States, must be proactive and vigilant when combating anti-Semitic violence. No country can afford to allow anti-Semitic violence to sprout and to grow. It must be destroyed. It is imperative that OSCE States act boldly to root out and to confront this dangerous trend.

Because of the significance of this topic and the gravity of the situation, today’s hearing will be an important tool to raise congressional and public awareness on the issue. During this hearing, I hope to learn, and we all hope to learn more about the situation of Jews living in the OSCE region as our panel of expert witnesses will provide insight into their current strife. Their policy recommendations will be of great interest to our panel, and I’m sure that both myself and the other members will act and act decisively on the recommendations that you make.

I’d like to yield to my fellow Commissioner and good friend, Ben Cardin, the gentleman from Maryland.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,  
MEMBER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really want to thank you for your leadership on this issue and I want to thank you for calling today's hearing. I think it is extremely important for us to hear from experts in our community as to the current status of anti-Semitism and the rise of anti-Semitism in the OSCE States. So I want to thank you very much for the opportunity of this hearing and for the witnesses that you have invited to be with us today.

We've seen a number of horrific incidents recently in France, Belgium and Germany, as well as the United Kingdom, Greece, Ukraine and Russia. Such incidents have included shootings, fire bombings and physical assaults. Synagogues have been a target of several fire bomb attacks in France and Belgium.

We've also witnessed terrible acts of anti-Semitism in Russia and the former Soviet Republics. Jewish hate propaganda is distributed in Moscow, Minsk and Vilnius. The mayor of a Lithuanian town continues to vent anti-Semitic statements on a regular basis. In Belarus, the government forcibly merged several periodicals into one government-controlled media outlet and reportedly appointed as editor a well-known person that is anti-Semitic.

Mr. Chairman, I'm hopeful that this hearing today will remind OSCE-participating States that they have pledged to unequivocally condemn anti-Semitism and take effective measures to both prosecute those committing such hate crimes and to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence. As you pointed out in your statement, the OSCE, in the 1990 Copenhagen Document, had a very, very strong statement in regards to anti-Semitism and the commitment of OSCE States.

Mr. Chairman, I think this hearing is particularly timely because I hope it will help us in preparing for the Berlin meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly, and I expect that we will be raising this issue with our colleagues in order for the Parliamentary Assembly to take appropriate steps in regard to the rise of anti-Semitism.

I'm disappointed that our friends and allies in Europe have not taken a more aggressive stand against anti-Semitism. Many European officials, in my view, have proved slow to publicly condemn the initial attacks and to vigorously prosecute the perpetrators of such acts. The increased attacks, coupled with government inactivity, understandably left many European Jews feeling isolated and unprotected. We should all call upon European governments to publicly and loudly condemn anti-Semitic attacks, establish more visible police protection of Jewish sites and synagogues and to more vigorously investigate, arrest and prosecute those responsible for these hate crimes against Jews.

Mr. Chairman, I'm very disappointed with the conduct of the United Nations agencies in the fall of 2001 at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban. I agree with our distinguished witness, Dr. Samuels, that the United Nations agencies at Durban, particularly the Human Rights Commission and UNESCO, were hijacked into a campaign on demonizing of the Jewish state, and through it the Jewish people. I look forward to hearing Dr. Samuels' firsthand account of his experiences in Durban.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I hope today's hearing will energize the members of this Commission on this issue. It's a very serious matter and one of the reasons the OSCE was created in the first place; that is to monitor these types of activities among member States. I think today's hearing is extremely important for us to carry out our responsibility.

Mr. SMITH. Commissioner Cardin, thank you very much for your very eloquent opening statement.

I'd like to yield to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Voinovich, Commissioner and a very activist member of this Commission, for any opening statements he might have.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,  
MEMBER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Sen. VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Co-Chairman. I thank you and Senator Campbell for calling this hearing.

As the international community continues to call on Israel and Palestinian officials to take critical steps to end the bloodshed and work toward peace in the Middle East, I am saddened and deeply disturbed by reports of anti-Semitism that have taken place recently in some of the world's strongest democracies: France, Germany, Belgium.

As our witnesses will testify, many of Europe's synagogues have become targets of arson and Molotov cocktails. As reported by the BBC, Jewish school buses were set on fire and destroyed in Paris last month, and attacks have also occurred in Russia and the Ukraine. The Commission has also provided more documentation of other events.

My reaction to this is, "My God, here we go again." All one has to do is to read James Michener's *The Source*, visit the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, visit Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, to chronicle the results of anti-Semitism and how it has devoured millions of people over the years.

And I think that it is very important that we throw down a mark now in regard to this. Many of us, as we look back on history, cannot understand why there weren't people around that made an issue of what was going on in Nazi Germany; many knew about what was going on, and they remained silent. So I think this is a call to our conscience today to speak out and make sure that we do not see history repeated. My feeling is that we have an obligation, as members of this Commission, to bring these incidents to the attention of our fellow inter-parliamentary members.

I'm going to be in Bulgaria at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly meeting next week. I'm going to take some of the information that the witnesses provide today and bring it to the attention of parliamentarians that I meet from the countries that are involved. Certainly all of us are going to do the same thing. We should have some very, very comprehensive resolutions that we are going to bring to the attention of our fellow parliamentarians when we are in Berlin at the OSCE meeting.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here today. I'm anxious to hear what they have to say. I am hopeful that we're going to guarantee that something is done about this by and bring this to the attention of not only government leaders, but also to our State Department and others that can make a difference.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Senator Voinovich, thank you very much. Thank you for your past participation in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, as well as Ben Cardin, in Paris, in Romania, in St. Petersburg, Russia. You've been a very activist member. We all appreciate your leadership.

I'd like to introduce our distinguished panel now, starting with Dr. Shimon Samuels, Director for International Liaison at the Simon Weisenthal Center in Paris. He is responsible for addressing issues of contemporary racism and anti-Semitism in Europe, Latin American and international organizations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, the OSCE and European institutions.

Next we'll be hearing from Mark Levin, who is the Executive Director of the NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia, for the last decade, and is a leading expert on national and international, political and legislative issues. He has led efforts in support of financial and technical assistance to the new independent states of the former Soviet Union. He has served as a public member of the U.S. delegation to various OSCE meetings.

On a very personal note, we were roommates on my first human rights trip, which was with Mark in January 1982, when we went to Moscow, and what was then Leningrad, and we were there for 10 days. We met with Natan Sharansky's mother, Ida Milgrom, Dr. Alexander Lerner, and a whole host of *refuseniks*. I deeply appreciate the leadership he has shown.

As a matter of fact, he came down after a speech that I'd given on the floor and invited me to go on that trip. That opened up my eyes to the horrific mistreatment of Jews in what was then the Soviet Union. He invited me on that trip, and I deeply appreciated it and his counsel over these many, many years.

I'd like then to introduce Ms. Alexandra Arriaga, who is the Director of Government Relations for Amnesty International USA. In this capacity, Ms. Arriaga is chief liaison, representing Amnesty International and human rights issues to the United States and foreign governments and officials, as well as coordinating all of Amnesty International's interaction with Congress and the administration.

We will hear from Rabbi Andrew Baker, who is Director of International Jewish Affairs for the American Jewish Committee. In this position, he is responsible for maintaining and developing AJC's network relationships with Jewish communities throughout the diaspora, and addressing the accompanying international issues and concerns. Rabbi Baker has played an active role in efforts to come to terms with Holocaust-era claims.

Next we'll hear from Mr. Kenneth Jacobson, Senior Associate National Director and Director of the International Affairs Division for the Anti-Defamation League. As Senior Associate and National Director, Mr. Jacobson is senior adviser on both domestic and international issues, ADL positions, and statements. As Director of the International Affairs Division, he oversees the monitoring of events affecting Jews in the Middle East, Europe and Latin America.

Please proceed, beginning with Dr. Samuels.



**TESTIMONY OF DR. SHIMON SAMUELS,  
DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL LIAISON,  
SIMON WEISENTHAL CENTER, PARIS**

Dr. SAMUELS. Chairman Smith, and Congressmen Cardin and Voinovich, I would like to thank this Commission for its invitation to address it for the second time. I came in from Paris especially. When I say the second time, in 1997, I had the honor to speak of the state of anti-Semitism in the OSCE member States at that time.

In fact, some of the issues that I raised then may not be so relevant today, but if we remember that only two years ago, at the millennium, peace processes and global economic boom presaged tranquility and prosperity around the world and certainly a new stage in the 2000-year precariousness of the Jewish condition. There were no more Jews of oppression, as the OSCE understood them. Our destiny and destination had become a matter of choice. The OSCE was vindicated as the Jewish condition seemed to be normalized both within its member States, and also apparently the Jewish state was becoming accepted into the family of nations.

Then came the Intifada, Durban and September 11, each releasing the old demons awaiting beneath the surface. We've heard from Congressman Cardin how the World Conference Against Racism in Durban was hijacked by these anti-Semitic forces, and especially U.N. agencies such as the Human Rights Commission and UNESCO, into a campaign which has, in fact, demonized the Jewish people.

I will never forget the Friday evening march against racism which did not end at Durban city hall, but at the Jewish club and synagogue, where Hitler fliers such as these asking, "What if I had won? There would be no state of Israel and no Palestinian bloodshed." Those fliers, together with the Protocols of Zion, were distributed. That night, I, as the chair of the Jewish caucus in Durban, together with our center's Associate Dean Rabbi Cooper, who is with me in this room, saw anti-Israel and anti-Zionist pretexts die at the gates of a Jewish club, endorsing a new anti-Semitism under the guise of a human rights solidarity campaign.

On 11 November last year, at the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights' Madrid conference on religious tolerance, I heard no protest at the Syrian ambassador's call for the exclusion of, "a certain arrogant religion that claims itself as chosen."

Similarly, UNESCO, which has become a propaganda mouthpiece for tyrannies from which the United States departed in 1985, continues to single out Israel systematically for abuse. An outrageous report, which I have with me, is to be delivered by its Director General, Koichiro Matsuura, on the 28th of May, next week, to the UNESCO executive board. It condemns Israel for crimes against culture—cultural heritage, particularly Palestinian—also against the educational structure of the Palestinians. There is no mention of the devastation of Jewish holy sites or incitement to Jew hatred in school texts, media and mosques. There is no sensitivity to Jewish victims of terror, nor violence against synagogues not 20 minutes away from UNESCO's Paris headquarters. The critical mass of U.N. and media pillorying of Israel is validating a slippage to anti-Jewish assaults. The outbreak of the Intifada in September 2000 unleashed a wave of Middle East-related anti-Semitic inci-

dents worldwide. Among OSCE countries, in the month of October 2000, the highest number of attacks perpetrated were in France, 70, followed by Canada, 29, the U.S., 22, Great Britain, 20.

The trend continued throughout 2001. Some 320 reported incidents in France targeting Jewish institutions. That was almost daily.

Official French police statistics have reported over 400 such incidents in the first 3 months of 2002, rising to a dozen incidents a day in the month of April; 380 in France, topping 127 in Germany and 57 in the United Kingdom.

The Weisenthal Center therefore, for the first time, placed on its web site a travel advisory, suggesting that Jewish visitors to France and Belgium at this time proceed with extreme precaution. Please note: not a boycott, but a travel advisory.

We'll be making available to this Commission a 20-page analysis which will focus on France and Belgium and the assaults and violent acts in those countries.

Most of these occur in neighborhoods where Jews and Muslims live in close propinquity. Muslim anti-Jewish activity increased *pari passim*, with the intensity of the Intifada, represented through the extreme imagery and anti-Israel hostility of the media, particularly European television.

The post-September 11, U.S.-led war against terror merged the traditional anti-Americanism of the left, the nationalism of the extreme right, with an immediate sympathy for Al Qaeda among young, socially marginalized Muslims in France.

Their graffiti paid homage, with such expressions as "Vive bin Laden." In June 2001, the Weisenthal Center met with French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, and he claimed that the assaults against Jewish institutions were only acts of suburban hooliganism. The Minister for the Interior, and for Religions, Daniel Vaillant, on the December 5, 2001, in his report, spoke of a net diminution of anti-Semitic threats and aggressions in the course of 2001.

I would call this the black box of denial. A Jewish school bus is attacked in suburban Paris. A bullet penetrates the windshield, wounding an 8-year-old girl. The police register the act as "broken windshield." A rabbi complains that his wrecked car is scrawled with, "Death to the Jews." The police note it down as "vandalism." So the Interior Ministry reports that hate crimes against Jews are down, and the media will not touch it, as it is a non-event. But the Weisenthal Center gets daily calls from victims, and in March this year, we organized hearings at Paris City Hall, under the auspices of Mayor Bertrand Delanoë.

We cracked open the black box. On 7 April, we cosponsored the demonstrator march, the demonstration of some 200,000 against anti-Semitism in Paris, and the media began to make it an issue.

To understand this black box, I think we should flash back 20 years. From October 3, 1980, the bombing of the Rue Copernic Synagogue, when the French Prime Minister, Raymond Barre reacted by saying a bomb at a synagogue killed innocent Frenchmen, until the August 9, 1982, the Rue des Rosiers massacre at Goldenberg's restaurant, there were 73 shootings and bombings of Jewish targets in Western Europe, of which 29 were in France, most in Paris. They ended with the Israeli entry in 1982 in Lebanon, and the consequent repatriation of European terrorists from Palestinian training camps in southern Lebanon.

The French Action Direct, German Bader-Meinhof, and Italian Red Brigades now focus their attacks on banks, embassies, NATO installations. European governments finally took actions. What had started with the Jews became a scourge for general society.

So, too, today. The authorities fear the Intifada's arrival in Europe. Regardless of the Arab-Israel conflict, already in Bezier, France, young fundamentalists shot the deputy mayor, several policemen and themselves, screaming "Allah hu akbar." Prime Minister Jospin belatedly pleaded that the Middle East be kept out of France, but the Middle East is in France. The Al Qaeda network was spread across Germany, France, Spain, Italy, and the U.K. We've shared with the authorities bona fide accounts of radical imams from Algeria, financed by Iran, preaching hatred of Jews and Christians to young alienated Muslim youth in suburban prayer halls. We know weekend cross-Channel excursions of jihadist students between Britain and the continent.

On another level, Europeans still battling with World War II collective myths of resistance and collaboration with the Nazi occupier seek absolution by propagating their guilt upon the victim. So grows the use of Holocaust language to Nazify the Israeli and Judaize the Palestinian.

Notoriously simplistic was a cartoon rendering the famous photo of the child under German guns at the fall of the Warsaw ghetto. By role reversal, a kaffia Arab headdress was placed on the child, and Stars of David on the Nazi's helmet. This month, the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*, the most important newspaper, banalized the Warsaw ghetto ruins by lampooning it in juxtaposition with a mock scene of Jenin.

The slippery slope from hate speech to hate crime is clear. Seventy-two hours after the close of the Durban hatefest, its virulence struck at the strategic and financial centers of the United States. If Durban was "Mein Kampf," then September 11 was possibly Kristalnacht, a warning.

What starts with the Jews is a measure and alarm signaling impending danger for global stability. A new anti-Semitic alliance is bound up with anti-Americanism, under the cover of anti-globalism.

The Holocaust for 30 years after the war acted as a protective Teflon against blatant anti-Semitic expression. That Teflon has eroded, and what was considered distasteful and politically incorrect is becoming simply an opinion. But cocktail chatter at fine English dinners can end as Molotov cocktails against synagogues.

Political correctness is also ending for others, as tolerance for multiculturalism gives way to populist voices in France, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Portugal, and last week, in the Netherlands.

These countries' Jewish communities can be caught between the rock, a radical Islamic violence and the hard place of a revitalized Holocaust-denying extreme right.

Common cause must be sought between the victimized minorities against extremism and fanaticism. We are familiar with the OSCE's Bucharest declaration calling for fighting *inter alia* against anti-Semitism. The Weisenthal Center has participated as an NGO at ODIHR reviews and is familiar with the Copenhagen, Moscow, Lisbon and Istanbul instruments, the legal, educational, monetary and reporting measures to fight anti-Semitism in OSCE member States. And in that

spirit, the Weisenthal Center has last week co-launched a grassroots project in the Paris suburbs with 19 presidents of suburban Jewish communities, SOS truth and security.

Attached to my report is a synthesis of 39 complaints from victims of anti-Semitism already reaching our hotline. They include dramatic testimony from targets age 12 to 81. Here are the forms that they have filled in. Volunteer lawyers accompany each victim to the police and local town hall to see that they are recorded as hate crimes. Social workers will address the trauma, particularly of the children. The data generated will be analyzed by the Weisenthal Center, and we'll be happy to share the findings with this Commission and with the OSCE.

We urge your constant involvement in cracking open the black box of myopia and prejudice and exposing the consequent dangers that threaten us all.

To conclude, in a *Le Monde* article of 16 January entitled "A New Anti-Semitism," University of Paris professor of French Literature Eric Marti, a Gentile, suggested that the Jews of Paris are once again *dhimis*, the protected second-class citizens under Islam. Quote, "They are tolerated subjects, but mistreated as perpetual hostages to the political necessities of the moment." He continues, "There has been no voice of political authority ready to say simply that regardless of the policy of Israel, there is nothing that can justify a policy of terror against Jews. Individual or group violence against the Jews of France could never have gone so far without the perception that even if not authorized there has at least been a certain indulgence or understanding."

He says, "This violence enjoys a double impunity. Practical impunity: there have been few arrests. Moral impunity: media banalization and euphemism." He concludes, "Every Jewish building in Paris requires protection. Every Jewish festival is an occasion for concern and anguish. Anyone walking in Paris or its suburbs wearing a kippa is imprudent. Any child leaving school may be beaten because he is Jewish, only because he is a Jew."

United States homeland security speaks of five levels of a color coded alert, viewing the current risk of terrorist attack at the third, or yellow, level. I would dare to say that anti-Semitism in France is now at the fourth, or orange, level.

The Jospin Socialist government missed a golden opportunity. Had it seriously addressed the anti-Semitism issue, it might have demonstrated an example of strategic planning in regard to the key issue of the presidential election campaign, insecurity and violence. By failing to do so, Le Pen's National Front stepped into the breach. Many in the French community consider next month's parliamentary elections as a test or its future in France.

We will be monitoring. If the authorities do not crack down and anti-Semitism goes to condition red, the top level, all French society, and not just Jews, is endangered, as in turn the malady will spread, an ironic twist to the idea of free movement across the frontierless Euroland.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Samuels, thank you very much for that comprehensive and very powerful statement.

Mr. Levin?

**TESTIMONY OF MARK B. LEVIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
NCSJ: ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF JEWS IN RUSSIA, UKRAINE,  
THE BALTIC STATES & EURASIA**

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, first, thank you for those very kind words. It's hard to believe it is been 20 years since we first started working together. And in some sense it is hard to believe that some of the issues we first addressed 20 years ago we're still having to address.

I want to thank you and Mr. Cardin in particular for your ongoing support.

And, Senator, I want to welcome you to one of the most important bodies that I believe was ever formed and created within the U.S. Government to promote human rights. We have come so far in the last 27 years, and yet we still have so much ground to continue to cover.

I want to limit my remarks. You all have my full statement. I want to really focus on what this Commission can continue to do and what the governments of the former Soviet Union need to do to address the ongoing problems of anti-Semitism.

As all of you know, NCSJ is an umbrella organization representing nearly 50 national Jewish organizations and over 300 Jewish federations and community relations councils. In fact, two of the organizations that belong to NCSJ are represented on today's panel: the American Jewish committee and the ADL.

Mr. Chairman and members, we appreciate the ongoing commitment of the Commission and the dedication of your staff to our issues. Since the last time I testified before the Commission, many positive changes have occurred in the successor states. It is almost ironic to sit here and listen to what's happening in the western part of the European continent.

However, anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union remains a serious issue. Today, for the most part, official or state-sponsored anti-Semitism does not exist. We are dealing with popular or "street" anti-Semitism, which is a more complicated issue to resolve.

As I said, rather than cataloging and analyzing incidents or reviewing past successes in our work together, all of which I do in my written statement and in additional submissions, let me address the question of where we go from here. I want you, when you have a chance, to review a sampling of anti-Semitic incidents in the former Soviet Union that I will submit for the record that we have compiled. This is just a sampling.

Also, we have the ADL annual review of anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Russia for submission, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, your full statement, Mr. Levin, and your selected incidents in the former Soviet Union and the ADL statement will be part of the record.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you.

The disease of post-Soviet anti-Semitism has now been diagnosed, not only by those of us on this side of the Atlantic, but increasingly by our respective counterparts in the successor states. The remaining problem is how to treat the disease.

As you all know quite well, the underpinnings of anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union are of limited relationship to the ongoing crisis in Western Europe. However, it is important to note that some in West-

ern Europe are using a similar tactic of the Soviet past: trying to espouse anti-Semitic views under the guise of anti-Zionism. It did not work when the Soviet Union existed and it will not work today.

The work of this Commission and several other bodies and processes throughout the U.S. Government continues to be vital in the following areas, and I want to highlight five specific points.

It is important, first, that monitoring, analyzing and publicizing trends in popular anti-Semitism through legislative initiatives, hearings such as this, and contacts with people from the region continue.

Proposing, implementing and evaluating programs to combat anti-Semitism and promote tolerance is a second step.

Third, outreach to your counterparts in the OSCE community, particularly in the upcoming meetings, is vital, and it is vital to further sensitize those from the successor states. I know in the next month or so all of you will have opportunities to do just that.

Fourth, through official and informal statements at all levels of the U.S. Government, communicating the message that anti-Semitism, xenophobia, intolerance and all manifestations of this disease are unacceptable.

Fifth, when granting benefits to these countries, whether in trade, military cooperation or cultural exchange, underscore the role that shared values play in advancing our bilateral relations with each of these countries. This is something that this Commission has done for many years and it is more necessary to do it now than ever before.

In summary, we need to criticize these countries' shortcomings, but recognize their efforts and successes.

Here is what can be done by the governments of the former Soviet Union and to some extent is being done on the ground in some of these countries:

First, enforce of existing laws by passing new measures that combat extremism, protect minority rights, and send the message that a tolerant society is a successful society.

Second, use the bully pulpit. Leaders at every level of society must speak out in general and against specific acts of movements that espouse anti-Semitism and bigotry.

Third, translate statements and actions by top national leaders and follow through at the regional and local levels through training and exchange programs, developing citizens' initiatives and public campaigns. This is something with which the United States can help each and every one of these countries. We need to share our experiences, our knowledge in how to promote a tolerant and open society.

Fourth, place priority on education efforts, especially with younger students, by integrating Holocaust and tolerance/intolerance units into the standard curriculum. Again, this is something that has barely scratched the surface in many of these countries. Given the experience of my colleagues at this table and others, it is something that the United States Government and the governments of the OSCE need to support, not by mere words, but by concrete action through support of specific proposals.

Finally, religious leaders must play a special role, particularly since religion so often is misused in our world for destructive purposes. It reaches so deep into the soul of society.

Two weeks ago, one of the leaders of the Russian Jewish community visited Washington and talked about the continued support by the Russian Orthodox Church for the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Something like this is very easy to stop and needs to be stopped, and can only be stopped through leadership.

Finally, as I said, we are working together on most of these issues together at this end and together in the successor states. The latest statements and legislation introduced by Russian President Vladimir Putin are very encouraging. However, revising the 1997 religion law will go one step further. We still have far to go, but we have already come far indeed when dealing with the countries of the former Soviet Union.

I think it is important to note and to recognize that just a few weeks ago, President Putin did speak out forcefully against extremism and intolerance. What we need to do, whether it is President Putin, Ukrainian President Kuchma, the leaders in the Central Asian and Caucasus countries or anywhere in the former Soviet Union, is to translate their words into concrete deeds.

We need to emphasize this at every point of contact. It is our hope and it is our expectation when President Bush meets with President Putin in Moscow later this week, that he will carry this message, that he will recognize the positive steps that have taken place, but outline what next steps need to be taken by the Russian Government.

And that it is also important to note that President Bush will be meeting with NGOs in Moscow to give them the support and recognition that they deserve. And in St. Petersburg, he will make a symbolic visit to the Choral Synagogue and meet with the full representation of Jewish communal leadership throughout Russia.

I hope my analysis and recommendations will help guide this important work—your important work—in the future. Once again I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Commission, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your recommendations, for your testimony. Later on I will be asking all of you, out of this hearing, I'm thinking of introducing a resolution on the House side, but also whether or not we ought to proceed with some language in Berlin. I think your recommendations were right on point, but I would appreciate, during the course of the Q&A, everyone's thoughts on that.

Ms. Arriaga?

**TESTIMONY OF ALEXANDRA ARRIAGA,  
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS,  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA**

Ms. ARRIAGA. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. First of all, let me thank you also for the many years of leadership that you personally have shown, not only to this issue, but issues related to persecution overall. You really have been one who has traveled to the most difficult areas, and met with people under incredibly severe conditions. Your leadership has been felt around the world.

I'd like to thank all of the members of the Commission.

I also would like to thank Congressman Cardin for your many years of leadership as well on this human rights issue.

I'd like to say to Sen. Voinovich, welcome. The Helsinki Commission, as you well know, has been at the center of efforts to bring about change in Europe in particular, and to putting the issues straight on the table.

Of course, the professional staff of the Commission who have been working on this for so many years, thank you.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before this hearing today. This is a very important topic.

I will summarize and submit my testimony for the record. I'd like just to focus my testimony primarily on the types of trends that are taking place right now, and also offer some recommendations.

Let me say at the outset that the prevalence of anti-Semitism today, and the disturbing wave of incidents occurring in Europe in recent months, are ones that Amnesty International has been documenting, and that strongly condemns. Amnesty International strongly condemns all anti-Semitic acts, and firmly opposes the recent wave of attacks in Europe. These acts are violations of the most fundamental human rights committed on the basis of an individual's religion or identity.

Not only is the victim harmed, so is the community.

The community and the victim become targets of fear, intimidation and other forms of harassment. These attacks demonstrate the depths of intolerance against religious, racial, cultural and national differences and the dangers intolerance breeds.

Amnesty International unconditionally opposes anti-Semitism and all such racist and threatening acts.

Throughout the last 40 years since Amnesty's creation, we have focused on issues of religious persecution in particular. The first conference of Amnesty International, held in 1961, was on the topic of religious persecution. It was held in Paris. Our first mission was to Czechoslovakia to look at the case of Archbishop Beran and also to gather information about conditions of religious prisoners.

Throughout the 1970s, Amnesty continued this type of work, and today I'd like to—and also through the 1980s—but today I'd like just to mention that Amnesty is continuing to advocate on behalf of the rights of individuals who face harassment and persecution for their faith.

This year the organization has redoubled its efforts to collect information on the recent anti-Semitic attacks, to document incidents, to monitor the progress that officials are making or not making on cases, and to take further action as needed to ensure that victims are protected and that perpetrators are brought to justice.

We are also launching two specific campaigns; one on Russia. This one will include anti-Semitism. Also on identity-based discrimination as a whole, which will also focus attention on anti-Semitism among other identity-groups that are targeted. This will also include not only recommendations for governments to account for their actions, but also educational materials for activists so that they can help bring these incidents to light and to bring about change.

Turning to the trends and contributing factors to anti-Semitism today, as I've mentioned, we are deeply saddened by the alarming rise in the number of anti-Semitic incidents worldwide. The attacks include threatening hate mail, death threats, verbal and physical abuse against Jews, arson and other forms of destruction of synagogue and other religious sites, and the desecration of cemeteries. Amnesty International strongly condemns this wave and calls on governments to redouble their efforts to combat racism in all its forms and to bring justice in all of



these cases. It is impossible, and I would not even want to attempt, to address the reasoning behind such abusive attacks. It may be worthwhile to consider some of the factors that may be contributing to the escalation of incidents at this time.

There were numerous anti-Semitic incidents throughout last year. There was a notable increase, however, beginning this year in March as tensions and violence increased in the Middle East. Since the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, hundreds of attacks have taken place worldwide. These attacks are wrong. They are anti-Semitic attacks against innocent men, women and children. They are racist, discriminatory and hateful attacks that cannot be justified under any circumstances.

We are especially concerned that legitimate criticism and debate about Middle East policy, in some instances, has degenerated into anti-Semitic and racist epithets and attacks. Criticism of specific Israeli actions and policies must not become the basis for violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. This has happened all over the world, including in the United States.

*The Washington Post* on Sunday (May 19, 2002) carried an article by William Booth about heightened tension on college campuses where peaceful demonstrations have turned into hateful, racist, and intolerant attacks. At San Francisco State University, Booth reports that events conducted by pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian demonstrators quickly degenerated. Both sides reportedly exchanged insults and epithets. University President Robert Corrigan is quoted as saying that “a small but terribly destructive number of pro-Palestinian demonstrators, many of whom were not SFSU students, abandoned themselves to intimidating behavior and statements too hate-filled to repeat.” Booth quotes a student leader of the pro-Israeli demonstrators as saying “[they] were screaming that Hitler should have finished the job” and he quotes a student member of the General Union of Palestinian Students as saying “they called us ... terrorists” and used other racist epithets. This devastating incident is not isolated and clearly illustrates a case in which what might have been legitimate views in opposition to Middle East policy transformed into hateful, anti-Semitic epithets against Jews and racial epithets against Palestinians. This is racism, and against Jews it is also anti-Semitism.

Taken to the next step, such hatred is extremely dangerous. We have heard the example in Belgium, for example, that Dr. Samuels has just illustrated; that is one of the examples. We understand that police arrested 80 rioters before restoring order, but these incidents, as far as we know, are currently under investigation without much progress.

It is a travesty that these incidents are taking place. Such crimes have no place in the legitimate discussion over what is happening in the Middle East today. The perpetrators have carried out anti-Semitic acts against individuals solely because they were perceived to be Jews or associated with Jews. We deplore such racist attacks.

The recent resurgence in anti-Semitism must also be considered in the context of Europe’s history. Economic and political dislocations in Europe have led to blaming scapegoats for problems, including wrongfully blaming Jews and other minorities as scapegoats. For instance, as we have heard, the ancient blood libel accusation has been revived in Russia, as has the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and fuel-

ing the Holocaust was Hitler's ideology that viewed Jews as an inferior race. Today, the language used to express racism often takes the form of derogatory and insulting language describing Jews.

Anti-Semitism remains among the most common expressions of ethnic and religious intolerance and xenophobia today, particularly in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe, but in many other regions, as well.

Recently, Europe has also seen a resurgence in violence by neo-Nazi skinheads. For too long skinheads have carried out violence and threats, and for too long their racist and anti-Semitic acts have been excused by officials as hooliganism or youthful pranks, despite the fear and suffering they inflict on their victims. This has been the case especially in Russia.

Recently, the Union of Councils for Jews in the former Soviet Union issued a report on skinhead violence in Russia, which concluded that local government authorities, through inaction, have made it possible for skinheads to organize and carry out violence without consequence for so long now that it has reached a point where it is almost beyond control. Another contributing factor is law enforcement inaction and continued impunity. Police and other law enforcement officials routinely subject racial and ethnic minorities to harassment and intimidation, and often respond with indifference to racial attacks. The irresponsible and disinterested attitude of many law enforcement officials is an underlying challenge to combating anti-Semitism and helps sustain the problem and create a climate of impunity for the perpetrators.

Amnesty International has collected numerous accounts of racist acts in which the victims frequently complain that law enforcement officials are reluctant to register attacks as racist or fail to understand that there is implications of racially motivated violence. Amnesty International believes that authorities must instead demonstrate a vigorous response to racism and ensure prosecution of offenders to end the tide of attacks against minorities.

Several presidents and prime ministers throughout Europe have made official statements condemning anti-Semitic and other racist acts, but words alone are not enough. Russia's president has publicly condemned racially motivated violence and anti-Semitism and urged tolerance for a multi-ethnic Russia. The government has also implemented an inter-agency program to combat extremism and promote religious and ethnic tolerance. But the implementation of this plan, according to the State Department, has been "sporadic."

In France, as we have heard, there is a particular serious wave. We are told that authorities are investigating many of these attacks, but many still fear for their safety and have little faith that the investigations will result in prosecution of the offenders.

More must be done to ensure governments redouble their efforts to combat anti-Semitic racism and to bring about justice against the perpetrators. The OSCE countries, of course, have a special obligation under those documents. We have already heard about the OSCE agreements that are particularly relevant to this issue, and I would encourage the Commission to take up these cases of anti-Semitic acts at the upcoming meeting in Berlin.

Clearly, governments have a mandate, and my recommendations focus on steps that they can take. I will be happy to go into more detail with the recommendations in the question-and-answer period. Prima-

rily what I'd like to say is that, we are recommending that countries adopt a national strategy plan that looks at what they can do to prevent attacks, but also at the actions of law enforcement officers.

And finally, since the United States is now in the midst of a Russia summit, I'd like to offer two specific recommendations. One is certainly that this issue be on the agenda with President Putin, that the inter-agency task force that they've set up actually begin to implement some of the recommendations and that law enforcement officers be held accountable, that there be specific steps taken to address the long-standing racist attitudes and anti-Semitic attitudes, specifically in Russia.

And finally, as the U.S. Congress looks at lifting the Jackson-Vanik amendment, that the Congress use this as an opportunity to leverage more change in Russia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Arriaga, thank you very much for your very comprehensive statement, your recommendations, your kind remarks, and especially your observations about this Commission.

I've been on this Commission for 19 years. It is the most bipartisan and, as Mr. Levin mentioned this earlier, effective—and yet underfocused-upon domestically—creature of Congress. So, I thank you for that.

Rabbi Baker, I would ask you to present your testimony. Governor Voinovich will take over. We do have a vote on the floor of the House, both Commissioner Cardin and I will return. Thank you for being here. I apologize for this inconvenience.

Governor?

Sen. VOINOVICH. Thank you.

Rabbi Baker?

**TESTIMONY OF RABBI ANDREW BAKER,  
DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL JEWISH AFFAIRS,  
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

Rabbi BAKER. Thank you, Senator, and members of the Commission for this opportunity to testify before you this morning.

The focus of my testimony will be on Western Europe, but I'm well-aware that the mandate of this Commission is a more broad one than that.

And in regard to that, I would like to call to your attention a conference the American Jewish Committee organized earlier this spring in Bucharest at the time of the summit of prime ministers of NATO aspirant countries. In Bucharest, we convened the leaders of Jewish communities throughout Central and Eastern Europe from these aspirant countries and from the newest members of NATO. We prepared for that event a status report that examines the problem of anti-Semitism and related issues confronting these Jewish communities. We would like to make this report available to members of the Commission, and I hope it can be added to the written testimony.

Sen. VOINOVICH. It talks about anti-Semitism in the aspirant countries—the nine that are trying to get into NATO, is that right?

Rabbi BAKER. The Vilnius 10, as well as Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic of the new countries, have joined NATO.

To the subject of Western Europe, we have seen in these last 20 months an alarming increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in Western Europe and particularly in France. By some accounts, these incidents, ranging from arson attacks on synagogues to personal altercations, are occurring at the rate of one a day.

No one disputes the number, but there are certainly many different views on what they mean. One State Department official, taking note of the fact that such incidents also spiked in 1982, at the time of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, has suggested that what we are seeing now is similar, almost as if anti-Semitic acts in Europe accompany conflict in the Middle East; much like inflation and higher interest rates going hand-in-hand.

A French Jewish leader attending our recent annual meeting here in Washington said that three synagogues had been set aflame in France in a single week. To him it could only be compared to Kristallnacht, to that night in November 1938 when the Nazis systematically burned synagogues throughout Germany and Austria.

I do not believe that we are replaying the 1930s, but we would be terribly remiss if we discount the seriousness of what is happening or simply ascribe it to fallout from the Middle East conflict.

There is without question a level of anxiety and concern and even fear among many Jews in Europe today that we have not seen in decades.

Recently, a friend of 20 years called me from Strasbourg. He, himself, survived the Holocaust as a boy, hiding out in Alsace with his parents. He has worked all of his adult life in the postwar institutions designed to promote cooperation and integration in Europe.

But his call was a personal one: could I offer some contacts in French-speaking Canada. His children wanted to know if their degrees, if their credentials earned in France might be accepted there. They wondered if Quebec might be an option for them in the future.

I asked my friend how this made him feel. "Of course I do not believe there will be another Holocaust," he said to me, "but we remember what our parents did not do."

There are, I believe, three distinct and separate sources for this anxiety. No doubt most of the anti-Semitic incidents that have occurred in France and probably elsewhere in Europe can be traced to large and increasingly radicalized Arab and Muslim populations. There are today 6 million Arabs and Muslims in France, and perhaps 15 million or more throughout the nations of the EU. They watch Al Jazeera, they read the Arabic press, and they have focused on the Middle East and identify with their brethren in Palestine.

For many of them, Jews have become the locally available focus for their anger and hostility. Many of the neighborhoods in which these Arabs and Muslims live are close by traditionally observant Jewish communities, and the targets are numerous. It is no exaggeration to say that Jewish parents now question whether it is safe to send their kids off to school wearing kippa on their heads or Jewish stars around their necks.

We are legitimately troubled by the continued success of the far right, the second problem. Le Pen and his National Front Party had been dismissed as a spent force in France, but in the recent French presidential election, as we all know, he garnered nearly 20 percent of the vote. Other right-wing populists in neighboring countries are also scoring

similar victories. Joerg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria is perhaps one of the worst examples. Here a case where his victory led to an invitation to join the government.

Anti-Semitism has often been a feature, though not necessarily the main feature, of these nationalist parties' platforms. In recent years, their electoral victories are probably due far more to their anti-immigrant and even anti-Arab agenda. But Jews take no comfort in their success.

Many European minorities, and European Jews in particular, find considerable safety and comfort in the idea of a strong European umbrella which extends over many ethnic and national groups who in turn can feel fully at home.

While these right-wing parties have been unable to build any transnational links in Europe, they do share common cause in their opposition to European integration and enlargement, and they could well succeed in slowing down and even reversing this process. If nationalist passions are inflamed, Jewish security, and certainly Jews' sense of security, is threatened.

The third: There is a growing anti-Israel animus on the left in Europe that encompasses certain political elites, media, NGOs and human rights activists. It begins with the premise that in the current Middle East crisis the Palestinians are the victims and Israel their persecutor. It is, sad to say, the accepted dogma in much of Western Europe.

However legitimate criticism of Israel may be, it has in many places crossed the line and become another form of anti-Semitism. The image of an Israeli who is frequently portrayed as an aggressive and racist violator of human rights is quickly conflated with the Jew. Political cartoons depict Israeli leaders in the same way as Nazi cartoonists drew their Jewish villains. Public demonstrations in support of the Palestinians often feature placards equating Israel or Zionism with Nazism. Even shouts of "Death to the Jews" have become commonplace. In this environment, even the secular and assimilated Jew is singled out and threatened.

No one can predict where these three problem areas will lead. Many European governments have avoided a serious confrontation with their growing Arab and Muslim populations, who resist assimilating in the ways of previous immigrant groups. In the meantime, they have become a source of increased lawlessness and a likely breeding ground for radical and fundamentalist ideologies which portray Jews and America as their special enemy.

We have frequently written the obituaries of right-wing European populists, only to see them resurrected. Hopefully, they will come to wither in a Europe that is integrated and whole, but the volatility in European elections make it far from certain that mainstream European leaders will have the support and confidence to resist making coalitions with these people and to steer the necessary centrist course. There is little doubt that some, but only some, of these anti-Semitic incidents will diminish if the Middle East conflict is resolved. Certainly for those people suffering in Israel and in the territories, we hope a resolution will come soon. But realistically, we are aware of the enormous difficulties involved to bring about even a cease-fire and a temporary halt to the bloodshed.

Sadly, many European leaders still cannot accept the severity of the problem. They need to hear from our government and from members of Congress emphatically, but in measured and sober tones, that anti-Semitism is again a problem in Europe and they must address it.

The security of Jewish institutions and individuals must be increased. Jewish citizens of Europe have the right to feel secure at home, on the street and in their places of worship. Criminal acts which authorities may want to quickly classify as simply acts of vandalism or hooliganism need to be identified as hate crimes and the perpetrators pursued and punished. Those who incite these crimes must be investigated and also brought to justice.

Debate on the Middle East conflict and even harsh public criticism of Israel have their place in European democracies. But there can be little doubt that biased, one-sided and unrelentingly hostile attacks on Israel have contributed to a climate, much as we witnessed at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban last summer, in which the Jewish state is demonized and presented as a pariah among the nations. A sense of balance and historical accuracy must be restored.

Earlier this month, the American Jewish Committee's 96th annual meeting here in Washington took place, and we also at that time played host to Jewish leaders from over 40 countries around the world, including many from the European continent.

During the course of those few days, they joined with our own members in programs and workshops. They heard from senior members of the administration, from congressmen and senators, including some of the members of this Commission. They understood that American values, which cherish a diverse and pluralist society, cannot tolerate anti-Semitism or any form of discrimination. They heard the natural expressions of American support for Israel as our democratic ally in the Middle East. They were heartened by what they saw, and they returned home invigorated by the experience. They know that the problems they face must be solved in European capitals, but they also know that the strongest allies in the fight against anti-Semitism today can be found here in this capital.

Thank you very much.

Sen. VOINOVICH. Thank you very much, Rabbi Baker.

Mr. Jacobson?

**TESTIMONY OF KENNETH JACOBSON,  
SENIOR ASSOCIATE NATIONAL DIRECTOR,  
ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE**

Mr. JACOBSON. Thank you. We are grateful to the Commission for holding these important hearings and appreciate the opportunity to share some observations and recommendations. It's wholly appropriate for the Helsinki Commission to examine this issue, not just because the OSCE was the first leading international body to formally recognize and condemn the problem of anti-Semitism, not just on humanitarian grounds, but as a matter of American national security as well.

As peoples who value pluralism, religious freedom and tolerance, Americans and Jews have been the targets of choice for haters and extremists. Our own observations have been that where Jews are scapegoated and demonized, incendiary anti-American rhetoric flourishes as well.

To that end, we at ADL have developed proactive anti-bias education programs being implemented today in Europe which address precisely the kind of intolerance and hate speech that target Jews and other minorities in Europe.

Rather than repeat some of the things that my colleagues have talked about, which are included in the testimony that we will present, I just would like to first talk briefly about global anti-Semitism and what some of its characteristics are.

One is the tendency to transport hatred from one region to another. In the Middle East, as we have heard, a surge of Arab and Islamic anti-Semitic propagandists have stirred up millions against Jews.

This anti-Semitism affects the willingness of individuals to commit suicidal acts of terror and of nations to acquire non-conventional weapons to threaten America's and Israel's very existence. The delegitimization of Israel and the caricatures of Jews play into the hands of the most extreme elements in the Middle East.

Through television, the incitement of the Middle East resonates with millions of Muslims in Western Europe. In France in particular, as we have heard, Jews have been the target of more incidents this year than in any year since the Holocaust, many committed by Muslim residents in France influenced by the tub-thumping anti-Semitism of Al Jazeera television, and reinforced by biased, anti-Israel media coverage within France.

And I want to reiterate a point that Rabbi Baker stressed. It's not enough simply to talk about leaders saying they're against anti-Semitism. When you have a society and a culture in which day in, day out the media coverage of the Middle East is such that Israel is being delegitimized, the moral underpinning of Israel is being attacked on a daily basis, it is not enough for people to say, "We are not anti-Semitic." It's terribly important that leaders begin to speak out to clarify those issues, so that average individuals who will not make the distinctions about criticism of Israel and about an assault about Israel's existence, will not see license in that to attack Jews.

And that's one of the most important things that, I think, that has to be done, try to find a way to clarify the Middle East issues within the context of media coverage in Europe.

The Internet has also become a useful vehicle, not only for transnational, but also for trans-ideological anti-Semitism. This has been in evidence in events surrounding September 11. The conspiracy theory that we have heard, that the Mossad was behind the attack, based on an absurd rumor that 4,000 Jews stayed home from work at the World Trade Center, has made the rounds throughout the Internet, crossing borders as well as ideologies. White supremacist groups in the U.S., prone to hate all non-white, non-Christians, suddenly find common ground with Muslim anti-Semites in spreading this story.

These partnerships of convenience, partnerships of hate, present new challenges and dangers.

I'd like to focus the rest of my remarks on responses to anti-Semitism and bigotry. The difference between a tolerant and an uncivil society does not lie in the biases within the hearts of the people, but in the public reaction of its leaders to manifestations of hate and bigotry. In our own country, as survivors were still being rescued from ground

zero, President Bush issued a strong call against stereotyping and hate against our neighbors who are Arabs, Muslims and look Middle Eastern.

Similarly, the first ad published by the Anti-Defamation League after September 11 was a call against stereotyping of Muslims, urging Americans not to fight hatred with hatred. ADL has spoken out unequivocally against those extremists who resort to violence, Jews and non-Jews alike.

Sadly, some European leaders have rationalized anti-Jewish attitudes and even violent attacks against Jews as nothing more than a sign of popular frustration with events in the Middle East. Something to be expected, even understandable, they say.

We have seen comparisons made to the imagery and atmosphere in Europe of the 1930s. While some of the imagery is, in fact, the same, it is clear that the world has changed dramatically since the 1930s. While there are some changes in anti-Semitic attitudes and positive efforts by governments and the Vatican, the most meaningful difference is the existence of mechanisms to combat and deal with manifestations of anti-Semitism in today's world.

But as the Durban conference demonstrated, the existence of human rights mechanisms alone is not enough. The utility of these mechanisms will rise or fall on the assertion of responsible moral leadership that bodies like the Congress and the CSCE are uniquely positioned to provide.

We know from our own experience that we cannot police heart and minds, and that bigotry cannot be legislated out of existence. We cannot outlaw hate, but we can rally nations around a credo of tolerance. We can promote and reward morally responsible action from government leaders and punish failures.

The CSCE has played a key role in charting a course for combating anti-Semitism over the years, condemning anti-Semitism eight years before the U.N. would even acknowledge anti-Semitism as a form of racism. Now is an important time to re-invigorate the follow-up on this agenda among OSCE member States.

First, we should not conduct business as usual. Congress and the CSCE can be a driving force in placing the issue of anti-Semitism squarely on the international diplomatic agenda, to be raised by presidents and cabinet secretaries in all multinational meetings such as the opening OSCE meeting in Berlin and NATO meetings in Bulgaria.

To give just one example, ADL called on participants in UNESCO's 164th executive board session, convening in Paris as we speak, to seize the opportunity to condemn anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere.

Secondly, we think there should be a convening of a real conference on anti-Semitism. While it is well-established that the U.N.'s World Conference on Racism in Durban served as a forum for anti-Semitism, let the OSCE use its good offices to convene a conference on anti-Semitism to expose its dangers and report on the performance of governments in responding.

The CSCE has been strong in this regard. Hearings such as this one that you've convened are so important. Building on this and other efforts now would be an important time to follow up with initiatives centered in Europe, and to seek ways to replicate this important activity in parliaments of OSCE member nations. The ADL stands ready to be of assistance in such efforts.



Thirdly, there is the subject of anti-bias education, which is an essential building block of combating hatred. Our experience has exposed a broad lack of understanding of what distinguishes legitimate political criticism of Israel from the stereotyping which can foment hatred and anti-Semitism. OSCE is a perfect mechanism through which one can promote educational best practices against intolerance. ADL currently partners with the European Union and others for peer training and other anti-bias education programs.

The recent international initiative on Holocaust education provides an interesting model as well. One of the essential lessons of the Holocaust is that words lead to murder; that the tolerating of bigotry and anti-Semitism can lead to genocide. We never expected, in the 21st century, after the world bore witness to the Holocaust, that we'd have to defend basic notions of freedom and tolerance, which we hoped would distinguish this century from the last.

While the last century witnessed the most heinous results of bigotry unchecked, fortunately, we also have witnessed in our lifetime powerful examples of how strong U.S. leadership has brought about dramatic change. When presidents, vice presidents, secretaries of state and members of Congress forced issues like religious freedom onto the diplomatic agenda, we witnessed the release of Soviet refuseniks, the spread of other freedoms across the former Soviet Union, and ultimately the fall of that regime. The U.S. must carry on this tradition armed with the clear knowledge that we can make a difference.

Anti-Semitism and bigotry, if allowed to flourish could become, once again, one of the most destructive forces in the new century. History has shown us where this can lead. Durban and other forums show that this virus is alive and well, and that civil society and human rights mechanisms alone are not enough.

Combating it right now must not be the task only of non-governmental organizations. America is fighting terrorism by embracing the democratic ideals that our enemies loathe. It is our instinct, our tradition to fight darkness with light. For the sake of peace in a stable, sane world we must respond to the silence of Durban and all of the anti-Semitism that we have seen in recent months with unequivocal action by responsible governments everywhere.

Thank you.

Sen. VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Jacobson.

Senator Clinton has just joined us.

Welcome. I understand that you have a statement that you'd like to read before the record.

Sen. CLINTON. Well, thank you very much.

**STATEMENT OF HON. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON,  
MEMBER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Sen. CLINTON. I apologize for not being able to get here earlier. I look forward to reading the transcripts of each of your testimonies. I commend the Commission and all of its members, from both the House and the Senate, for holding this hearing.

It's unfortunately quite a timely topic. Over the last several months as I'm sure you have detailed, there has been an alarming increase in anti-Semitic violence throughout Europe.

And it is something for which all of us have to not only be vigilant but prepared to take action. I am hoping that today, as the president heads toward Europe, that will provide an opportunity for him to raise this alarming issue with the European leaders and the European public that he will have a chance to address.

At the NATO–Russia summit in Italy and during visits to France, Germany and Russia, where some of the worst outbreaks of anti-Semitic violence have occurred, the president has the opportunity to give voice to American concerns over this recent increase in anti-Semitism.

I know that we all share a deep concern about the reports we have been receiving from throughout Europe. I’ve personally spoken with a number of people who have raised those concerns directly with European leaders. I would urge the president to call on European leaders to acknowledge publicly and without reservation the anti-Semitic character of these attacks as violations of human rights, and further to call upon these nations and governments to utilize the full powers of their law enforcement tools to investigate the crimes and punish the perpetrators.

As we all know, freedom of religion is guaranteed by all Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] participating States and over the years, the OSCE has continuously condemned anti-Semitism. The 1990 Copenhagen Concluding Document of the OSCE declares all participating OSCE States will “unequivocally condemn” anti-Semitism and take effective measures to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence.

And because of these recent disturbing attacks, I recently introduced a resolution with Senator Gordon Smith, another member of the Helsinki Commission, as well as with Senators Schumer and Hatch, that expresses the sense of the Senate regarding anti-Semitism and religious tolerance in Europe, calling on European governments to use their full power of law enforcement to investigate and punish anti-Semitic violence.

And I hope that we will not only pass this resolution in the Senate and that the president will very directly raise this important matter in Europe, but that we will begin to hear more than a deafening silence from European leaders. That is a very important role for the Helsinki Commission to be playing in this, because clearly there can’t be any more terrible potential for the violation of human rights in Europe or elsewhere than the resurgence of anti-Semitic violence, as we have seen.

So, Mr. Chairman, I submit my entire statement for the record.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, Senator, your full statement will be made a part of the record. Thank you.

We now go to some questions on the part of the panelists. Dr. Samuels, you mentioned a number of things in your very extensive statement. A travel advisory—extreme caution has been sent out to Jews visiting France. Has the United States State Department, to the best of your knowledge, in any way picked up on this heightened threat to Jews, in this case American Jews, who might travel to France? Have they issued any similar advisory, as far as you know?

Dr. SAMUELS. As far as I know, no. I do not think so. I think that what we did was, in a way to take a line of least resistance where some organizations were—and many individuals calling us regarding the

imposition of the boycott—we felt that a boycott would be ineffective, also the Jewish people have been the victim of boycotts for so long. Therefore, travel advisory was the minimum that we could do.

This is not only a warning to Jewish visitors to France and Belgium, but also to Americans. I think that it would be correct on the part of this committee, perhaps, to raise with the State Department the possibility that it should be broadened.

I would like to draw from that, the other proposal that you mentioned, Congressman, and that is, the heightened role for the OSCE at the Berlin meeting. I think that this is important because of the knock-on effect on East European countries, which are not members of the EU, but are candidates in the enlargement process. Through the OSCE, there is a very important means to influence those countries and thereby have a feedback effect also on the West European members of the OSCE.

So I would endorse that in particular. I think that not only in Berlin, but the fact that the presidency of the EU moves to Copenhagen, I think there should be some emphasis there, too.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that.

We plan on drafting language. I would hope to offer it as an amendment or perhaps even a freestanding resolution in Berlin. I know that we'll have the full support of our delegation. It'll require other delegations to cosponsor to make it in order, and I think we can get that as well. But it certainly will be a timely intervention on the part of our delegation to very aggressively assert our concern about this alarming, rising tide of anti-Semitism in Europe.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, would you yield?

Mr. SMITH. Yes. I'd be happy to yield.

Mr. CARDIN. I think that we should really work that as a freestanding resolution. I think the point that Mr. Jacobson made that this is not business as usual is important for us to underscore in Berlin. So I would just encourage our staff now to explore other delegations that may want to join us as a freestanding resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sen. VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to comment also that we ought to get a hold of the executive director of the OSCE and share with him our real concern about this growing anti-Semitism in Europe and ask if possibly we could have a special session of the OSCE at the meeting in Berlin that deals with this issue.

If we just have a resolution, it may just be one of several things discussed. I think that we ought to say it should be the most prominent thing that we discuss at this meeting in Berlin. I'd be glad to join with you and others in a letter to him, urging him to come up with some ideas on how we could highlight the issue.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate the gentleman's suggestion—again, the main reason why we wanted to have this hearing, one, was to get expert voices who know this issue intimately and have lived and fought for human rights so valiantly to come forward with your best recommendations, your best insight as to the state of affairs as of right now, and also where you think we're going in the future.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, can I just add a recommendation...

Mr. SMITH. Sure.

Mr. LEVIN. ... based upon our experience over the last 20 years in different OSCE meetings? And that would be to work with the NGO community in advance of the Berlin meeting to find out which NGOs

will be represented there and to enlist their support in meeting with the various delegations. It is something we did very successfully when confronting the Soviet Union on issues related to the release of refuseniks and anti-Semitism.

Mr. JACOBSON. I just want to add my support. I think it is terribly important that a separate session be devoted to this so it is not just thrown into a broader agenda—because I think that approach will highlight that it is not business as usual. If it is thrown into other discussions, then it'll just get lost.

Sen. VOINOVICH. I think that idea of working with NGOs is a good one also. When we were in St. Petersburg, we—you recall, Mr. Chairman, we met with the NGOs there. And it is one way of getting some real information what's really going on.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, if you may yield just one more second, if I might just make a very brief point, another tool we have available are our bilateral meetings. We do meet with others delegations during our visits on the Parliamentary Assembly. I would just suggest it may be appropriate for us to meet with the French delegation.

Mr. SMITH. As we have. I think it is a very good recommendation because the drift, obviously, is very alarming. The numbers cited by Dr. Samuels were devastating.

Let me say this, so it is clearly on the record. The Berlin meeting's focus is terrorism. A supplementary item at this point would get the issue prominent front and center. Back in St. Petersburg when we had the OSCE PA meeting, I actually offered a Supplementary Item on trafficking in women. We were met with disbelief and people saying, "What are you talking about? That sounds like hyperbole and exaggeration." And obviously, it was not. But that began a dialogue with those delegations.

I think what we ought to be doing, and taking up Mr. Voinovich's recommendation, is to be looking for perhaps a special session of our Parliamentary Assembly, whether it be a several-day meeting or a weekend, to focus on this terrible and alarming trend of anti-Semitism. Do it there—really assert it very aggressively in Berlin and say, "But this isn't the end of it." Because it is too late, really, to change the main focus of this upcoming meeting.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, if you would just yield on that point, I would just suggest that I think the rise of anti-Semitism is directly related to terrorism. I think we're going to find that we'll have an opportunity during this meeting to underscore our alarm in the context of international terrorism as to what's happening with the rise of anti-Semitism.

I think Senator Voinovich's point about a separate opportunity is important also. But I think we need to do both. We need to take advantage of the Berlin meeting as well as stress the need for a separate...

Mr. SMITH. Frankly, I think we're saying the exact same thing. Again, that's why this hearing is being held today, to launch that renewed effort.

We have had hearings before—a matter fact, we called it the "Rising Tide of Anti-Semitism," particularly as it related to the break up of the Soviet Union. What we saw was an alarming trend there.

But now we're seeing it in Western Europe with a virulence that portends very, very terrible things, not to mention the victims that are being created now.

Yes, Dr. Samuels?

Dr. SAMUELS. It may be useful as a point of information for Congressman Cardin, the Weisenthal Center wrote, prior to the presidential elections in Paris, to every member of the senate and the national assembly, asking them their positions on the anti-Semitism wave in France and what they might be able to do in their respective parliamentary committees. We have since then, and certainly just before the first round of the parliamentary elections in a couple of weeks, received over 30 responses.

Now, many of those parliamentarians who expressed an interest in responding to us are members of the parliamentary assembly who will be going to the Berlin meeting. I would be happy to share those names with you so that you could contact them directly.

Mr. SMITH. That would be very, very helpful, Doctor.

Sen. VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman?

Sen. CLINTON. Mr. Chairman? Go ahead.

Sen. VOINOVICH. I'm going to have to leave in about five minutes. But I am going to go to Bulgaria for the NATO meeting. I have the information that was prepared about the various countries.

But I think, Mr. Levin, you prepared that.

If you have any really outrageous situation in one of those countries, or several, I'd like you to bring them to my attention, get it to my office, because I will be there talking to representatives from NATO aspirant countries, and others. Just as we did when we were in Romania, we talked to them. The problem there was church property, and a lot of other things. It seems to me that it would be a wonderful opportunity for me to confront them with the information and say, "Hey, you're interested in coming into NATO and what are you going to do between now and when it is considered in Prague to remedy the situation that has arisen in your country?"

So I really would welcome you or anyone else to provide that to me, because this is going to be a great opportunity to bring it up to them.

PANEL MEMBER. Senator, we can certainly do that.

Rabbi BAKER. This is with specific reference to Bulgaria...

Sen. VOINOVICH. No, it would be...

Rabbi BAKER. ... or to all of the NATO...

Sen. VOINOVICH. We have got the Balts. I notice there is information on Lithuania where something's happening there in one of the examples here. But it is the three Balts, it is Slovakia, Slovenia, it is Bulgaria, it is Romania. I mean, those are the ones really that...

Rabbi BAKER. Yes in this document, we had detailed the situation in each of those countries.

Sen. VOINOVICH. You're the one that prepared this thing.

Rabbi BAKER. Yes. I'm happy to be in touch with your office to give your staff any updates since the end of March when this was prepared.

Sen. VOINOVICH. I will have Joni contact you today because we're going to be leaving on Friday, so...

Rabbi BAKER. Then I will be happy to do it this afternoon then, sure.

Sen. VOINOVICH. OK, thank you.

Sen. CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, too, I wanted to follow up on the NGO mention, because it would be very helpful to get ahead of time the names of NGOs that might be receptive. Because we should lay the groundwork for that. Because the NGOs play a major role, not only within the

Helsinki Commission's ongoing processes, but within the media of various of these countries. We need to know who might speak up and be, you know, very supportive of our concerns.

So if you could help us with that too, that would be...

PANEL MEMBER. Absolutely.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask a couple of additional questions and then go to my colleagues for any questions they might have.

The European integration and the concept of one Europe, does that raise serious concerns about anti-Semitism becoming more manifest, rather than pockmarked throughout the continent? Or does it offer an opportunity perhaps of having a stronger, more centralized reaction to try to end anti-Semitism?

Rabbi BAKER. Can I speak to that, Congressman?

I think it offers clear possibilities, but it poses some serious problems as well. As I mentioned, I think one of the elements that various of the nationalist populist forces in Europe seem to have in common is playing on public disillusionment and trouble with regard to European integration and enlargement.

Frankly, minorities in Europe, Jews being one of them, feel I think a more easy opportunity to be patriotic Europeans, to fit under an umbrella in which you have a diverse group of nations, minorities, ethnic and religious communities. The extent to which that works and that umbrella is increased and strengthened, I think it makes them all feel more secure. So if enlargement and integration happens smoothly, it will be positive.

But we know even slight tremors of concern in the common economic, common currency and so on in Europe has created backlash in various member States that has bolstered these nationalist forces, then that's a source of trouble. So the extent to which you are in discussion with your European counterparts and can really emphasize the seriousness here, and as Senator Clinton said, the silence that we seem to hear, the fact that many people in Europe, European leaders simply do not take this as a serious problem, will really be critical.

Mr. JACOBSON. I would just add that while Europe is moving together, there are two forces at work that challenge the identity of individual Europeans. On the one hand, you have the question, "Am I still a Frenchman or Italian when there is a European Union? What does that mean?" And at the very same time, you have an issue of multiculturalism and diversity.

ADL went to Germany, for example, in the early 1990s after neo-Nazi skinhead attacks. We said to the Germans, "You have a great democracy in Germany, but not much of a sense of a pluralistic democracy; what does it mean to be a German?"

At this point, when there are immigrant groups coming into all these countries, you have average Europeans feeling that they're a little bit under attack in terms of identity on two levels. One in terms of the European Union, and secondly, in terms of they're being told that to be a good Frenchman doesn't mean only that you have to be of French blood, that there have to be others integrated. Those are major challenges. I think what all of us are saying is that's where the leadership role really becomes critical. The leadership role and the education programs at the same time.

It is not going to be a smooth path. We see the reactions on both levels. But I think if there is the kind of public reaction we saw in France in the second round of the election where people began to take responsibility, there is hope. I think that's the role that we can play as well.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, we have seen this happening in the successor states of the Soviet Union already. Particularly in Russia and Ukraine, you have this push and pull where they want to be integrated into the larger continent but, at the same time, maintain their distinct identity.

As far as dealing with the issue of the right wing, people such as David Duke from the United States, but also European right-wing personalities, have tried, in some cases successfully, to infiltrate into Russian society and spread their message. Not to repeat everything that's just been said, but that's where, as I said earlier, the bully pulpit becomes important; this is where leadership is needed and is necessary.

Ms. ARRIAGA. If I might just add as well, not only is leadership in education necessary—I agree with the panel on this—but also implementation of local laws, including acknowledgment of hate-based crimes and actual prosecution of those crimes.

Mr. SMITH. If you could hold that thought just for a minute, Senator Clinton does have to leave.

Sen. CLINTON. I am so sorry. We have a vote. I just looked up there. I was so interested in what all of you were saying.

It would be extremely useful as well—and this probably goes beyond the confines of the jurisdiction of this committee, Mr. Chairman—but I am concerned that it is not just the leadership that's not saying anything. There are no voices. There are, you know, maybe a few here or there, but by and large, it is an indifference that is very frightening, because it provides fertile ground for what we're seeing and worried about.

And perhaps you could also give us some suggestions about how we could reach out, even before Berlin, to various people, to see whether we could get more public reaction, more words of concern coming from elected officials, opinion leaders, et cetera—academics, whomever. Because I worry that this is obviously rooted in both very ancient hatreds and biases, and some new phenomena of the modern world. Then there are items in the news that seem to fuel it, and kick it off.

So we need a multilayered strategy, if you will. But I would like to know whether there are people we could individually reach out to, to try to be more encouraging of their taking action now—of saying something now.

Yes, Dr. Samuels?

Dr. SAMUELS. Yes, this is exactly the point I wish to raise, Senator Clinton. I think that integration is a problem from one point of view, as we have just heard, but it can also be part of the solution.

I was elected to the board of something called ENAR, European Network Against Racism. It is an umbrella for 660 anti-racist organizations. This is a board of 32 members, two from each of the 15 countries of the European Union and two from the pan-European organizations. In fact, I was elected by the Muslims of Europe, quite ironically, 3 years ago, and re-elected last August, because we shared common problems: of the extreme right, of fascism in football, of hate on the Internet, skinheads, et cetera.

Today, those same people, perhaps more delicately, tell us that we share another problem, and that is fundamentalist Islam, which is also extremely threatening to their situation. I think that this gives us the possibility to reach out.

The Weisenthal Center has attempted to propose some programs, some projects, of common ground. For example, we started, multilaterally with the Council of Europe, and also bilaterally with some European countries, to propose that political demonstrations that march by houses of worship, be they churches or mosques or synagogues or temples, be outlawed unless with the prior agreement of the administration of that house of worship. We have found that many NGOs are interested in this proposal, of all faiths. I think that that's one example.

Rabbi Cooper today brought the latest CD-ROM of the Weisenthal Center on digital hate, "Digital Hate 2002," which shows that hate is totally indivisible. It's not just against Jews, it is against Christians and women and Muslims, et cetera. It is also an introduction to terrorist sites, and not only hate sites.

And this also is an issue of common ground. I think that using these types of instruments, we are able to rebuild some of the alliances with NGOs that was ravaged at the Durban meeting, in order to try to raise a consciousness that we are dealing on the same page on these issues.

Mr. SMITH. We have another vote, regrettably, on the House floor, and Mr. Cardin and I will have to leave. But I'd like to follow up, and then ask him perhaps to ask additional questions as well. The recommendation to convene a real conference on anti-Semitism, I think, is a good one. Not only should we pursue that track with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which is obviously separate from the OSCE itself, although we talk to each other—we should follow up on your recommendations, Mr. Jacobson, to the President, to Colin Powell, to Condoleezza Rice and the rest of the foreign policy team. They should use these ideas as an action item, especially in light of the hate fest that occurred in Durban.

As you pointed out, the violence of silence of traditional human rights groups not being involved the way we traditionally know they should have been, could have been, and have been. Your point is very well taken, especially given that Europe should lead on this, as we should lead—especially given the Holocaust remembrance, never again.

I do have one additional question, you may want to comment on that very quickly. Concerning UNESCO; there was a vote in the House of Representatives recently for the United States to rejoin UNESCO. I, frankly, voted against it. I think the U.N. has its good organizations, like UNHCR and UNICEF, and the Security Council has played a key role on some very important things in the past. There are other organizations, as well that do a good job, but UNESCO traditionally has not, at least in my view. What is your view, whether or not we should join it?

Ben, you might want to throw out some questions right now, just so they can...

Mr. CARDIN. I want to hear the answer on UNESCO, and I want to give you as much time as you need.

I just really wanted to thank the panel. I thought this was extremely helpful.



And, Dr. Samuels, we are going to call upon you to get information to help us. Your organization has been extremely reliable in opening up that black box. So we want to get as much information as possible.

And I just want to compliment all five of you on specific recommendations. I think the codification of hate crimes is something we need to proceed on. I believe education is key. We have seen in some of these countries, some of these states, that they've actually been counterproductive in their educational programs. I think having a positive aspect to the education support of the states would be helpful here. I think some of the other recommendations about the government officials being more open and visible in their consistent efforts against anti-Semitism is important.

But I want to give you as much time as possible to answer the UNESCO question.

Dr. SAMUELS. I'd like to congratulate Congressman Smith on his vote. I think that the United States—and I can document this—has much more influence from outside UNESCO than from within. Although the previous Director General did make certain steps and gestures in order to try to show that UNESCO had changed, I think the present administration shows that it has not in any way.

The organization has been hijacked. In fact, one of the best committees of UNESCO, which is the World Heritage Committee, only last week came out with a biased attack on Israel on the question of Israel being a criminal, practicing crimes against cultural heritage, which is quite out of place. I only hope that when the World Heritage Committee meets in Zurich, it will reverse that. Perhaps it will, due to pressure from the United States, from without.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Any final comments before we conclude?

Mr. Cardin summarized it very well. Your recommendations will not only be read, they will be studied, analyzed and acted upon. This is, I think, a crucial crossroads, and we need to lead. The president needs to lead. President Bush certainly has a tremendous amount of following and credibility, even in Europe, and even though they like not to acknowledge that.

I would hope that, going forward, you will continue to provide us with the best possible insights so we can be more effective on behalf of those you serve.

Thank you so much for being here.

The hearing's adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:50 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

**APPENDICES****PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. BEN NIGHORSE CAMPBELL, CHAIRMAN,  
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

The anti-Semitic violence spreading throughout the OSCE region gives cause for deep concern for its scope and viciousness. Coupled with a resurgence of aggressive nationalism and an increase in neo-Nazi "skin head" activity, the leaders of the OSCE participating States face the urgent challenge of stemming the tide of escalating anti-Semitic violence while condemning such attacks against members of the Jewish community or their institutions. As President Bush resolutely declared, "We reject the ancient evil of anti-Semitism, whether it is practiced by the killers of Daniel Pearl, or by those who burn synagogues in France."

OSCE participating States, including the United States, have pledged to unequivocally condemn anti-Semitism and take effective measures to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence. Manifestations of anti-Semitism must not be tolerated, period, regardless of the source.

I urge President Bush to communicate American concerns over anti-Semitic attacks as he meets with European leaders, including President Putin. I also hope that he will meet with representatives of the affected Jewish communities during his current trip to Europe.

Attacks ranging from shootings, fire bombings, and physical assaults have occurred in places as different as London, Paris, Berlin and Kiev. Vandals have struck in Brussels, Marseille, Bratislava, and Athens. Anti-Semitic propaganda has been spread in Moscow, Minsk and Vilnius, among others. No longer can these acts of intolerance and violence be viewed as separate occurrences, as an escalation in anti-Semitic acts is clearly manifest in Europe and the OSCE region, and the United States is not immune.

Several governments of OSCE participating States were noticeably late in responding to the initial wave of attacks. Brushing aside evidence of an overall increase in anti-Semitic acts, some officials attributed the violence to life in high crime areas. Leaders were also slow in publicly decrying such attacks. Timidity will not suffice, as the scourge of anti-Semitic violence must be confronted head-on and elected officials must display leadership in the face of such crimes.

Responsible leaders have come forward in the aftermath of many of the recent attacks, but vigilance will remain essential. Firmly establishing visible police protection of Jewish sites and synagogues has occurred. Investigations, arrests and prosecutions for alleged perpetrators are underway. Such resolve will be critical if the participating States are to stem the tide of escalating anti-Semitic violence in the OSCE region.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, COMMISSIONER,  
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

I would like to thank the Chairmen, Senator Campbell and Congressman Smith, for calling this hearing today to discuss the recent surge of anti-Semitism in the OSCE region.

As the international community continues to call on Israeli and Palestinian officials to take critical steps to end the bloodshed and work towards peace in the Middle East, I am saddened and deeply disturbed by reports of anti-Semitism that have taken place recently in some of the world's strongest democracies—including France, Germany and Belgium.

As our witnesses will testify, many of Europe's synagogues have become targets of arson and Molotov cocktails. As reported by the BBC, Jewish school buses were set on fire and destroyed in Paris just last month. Attacks have also occurred in Russia and Ukraine.

My reaction is—my God, here we go again.

All one has to do is to read James Michener's *The Source*, visit the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, all of which chronicle the plague of anti-Semitism in this world and what can happen if we do nothing to stop it.

Today's hearing is extremely important because of the need to bring what's going on to the attention of world leaders and opinion makers to stop this growing anti-Semitism in its tracks.

I cannot help but think—where were the Helsinki-type commissions in the early years of the Hitler regime? How could the world tolerate what many knew what was going on in Germany?

We have to stop this right now.

My hope is that these hearings will document what is going on, and with that evidence we can bring the information to the attention of the world leaders who can step in and make it stop. I assure the witnesses here today that I am going to raise some of these issues next week in Bulgaria with some of the parliamentarians at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Meeting, particularly with officials from those countries where we have seen acts of anti-Semitism. I will be working with the Helsinki Commission to develop resolutions for discussion at the next meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in July that will take place in all places—Berlin.

I thank the witnesses for being here this morning, and I look forward to their testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, COMMISSIONER,  
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding a hearing on “The Rise of Anti-Semitic Violence in Europe.” As you know, this hearing is quite timely. Over the last several months, there has been an alarming increase in the amount of anti-Semitic violence in Europe.

In France alone, authorities reported nearly 360 crimes against Jews and Jewish institutions in the just the first two weeks of April. Some of the most notorious attacks include an assault on a Jewish teen soccer team in Bondy, France in April and the brutal beating of two Jewish students from the United States in Berlin, Germany and the burning of Jewish schools in Creteil and Marseille. Further, a mob attacked Jewish worshipers in a Ukraine synagogue, vandals denigrated several synagogues in Russia and synagogues elsewhere in the OSCE region have suffered firebomb attacks.

President Bush’s trip to Europe beginning today provides an opportunity for him to raise this alarming issue with European leaders. At the NATO-Russia summit in Italy and during visits to France, Germany and Russia—where some of the worst outbreaks of anti-Semitic violence have occurred—President Bush has the opportunity to give voice to American concerns over the recent increase of anti-Semitic violence with European leaders. I urge President Bush to call on European leaders to acknowledge publicly and without reservation the anti-Semitic character of the attacks as violations of human rights and to utilize the full power of their law enforcement tools to investigate the crimes and punish the perpetrators.

Anti-Semitism was one of the most destructive forces unleashed during the last century. Given the horrors that Jews experienced in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, this recent increase in anti-Semitic violence in Europe requires a vigorous response by all OSCE countries. As we all know, freedom of religion is guaranteed by all Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) participating states and over the years, the OSCE has continuously condemned anti-Semitism. The 1990 Copenhagen Concluding Document of the OSCE declares all participating OSCE States will “unequivocally condemn’ anti-Semitism and take effective measures to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence. It is therefore appropriate for the OSCE to continue to monitor and urge action against these anti-Semitic attacks.

Because of the recent disturbing attacks on Jews in Europe, I recently introduced a resolution in the Senate with Senator Gordon Smith, another member of the Helsinki Commission, as well as Senators Schumer and Hatch, that expresses the sense of the Senate regarding anti-Semitism and religious tolerance in Europe. The resolution calls on European governments to use the full power of their law enforcement tools to investigate and punish anti-Semitic violence, to decry the rationalizing of anti-Jewish attitudes and even violent attacks against Jews as merely a result of justified popular frustration with the conflict in the Middle East; and to take measures to protect and ensure the security of Jewish citizens and their institutions. I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues to pass this resolution.

An important part of combating anti-Semitic violence is shining light on its evil nature and destructive impact. Today's Helsinki Commission hearing is an important part of that process. I look forward to hearing and learning more from this distinguished panel.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,  
COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by thanking you for calling this hearing today on a matter of the utmost importance to the Jewish community and to human rights advocates both in the United States and around the world. I am gravely concerned about the recent sharp escalation of anti-Semitism and acts of racism and violence directed towards members of the Jewish community in the OSCE region.

We have seen a number of horrific incidents recently in France, Belgium, and Germany, as well as in the United Kingdom, Greece, Ukraine, and Russia. Such incidents have included shootings, fire bombings, and physical assaults. Synagogues have been the target of several firebomb attacks in France and Belgium. We have also witnessed terrible acts of anti-Semitism in Russia and the former Soviet Republics. Jewish hate propaganda is distributed in Moscow, Minsk, and Vilnius. The mayor of a Lithuanian town continues to vent anti-Semitic statements on a regular basis. In Belarus, the government forcibly merged several periodicals into one government controlled media outlet and reportedly appointed editors with well known anti-Semitic views.

Mr. Chairman, I am hopeful that this hearing today will remind OSCE participating States that they have pledged to unequivocally condemn anti-Semitism and take effective measures to both prosecute those that commit such hate crimes and to protect individuals from anti-Semitic violence. I am pleased to note that the OSCE was the first organization to successfully create an international document condemning anti-Semitism, as stated in the 1990 Copenhagen Concluding Document.

I am disappointed that our friends and allies in Europe have not taken a more aggressive stand against anti-Semitism in Europe. Many European officials, in my view, have proved slow to publicly condemn the initial attacks and to vigorously prosecute the perpetrators of such acts. The increased attacks, couple with government inactivity, understandably left many European Jews feeling isolated and unprotected. I continue to call on European governments to publicly and loudly condemn anti-Semitic attacks, establish more visible police protection of Jewish sites and synagogues, and to more vigorously investigate, arrest, and prosecute those responsible for these hate crimes against Jews.

I am very disappointed, Mr. Chairman, with the conduct of United Nations agencies in the fall of 2001 at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban. I agree with our distinguished witness Dr. Samuels that United Nations agencies at Durban, particularly the Human Rights Commission and UNESCO, were "hijacked into a campaign for the demonization of the Jewish state and, through it, of the Jewish people." I look forward to hearing Dr. Samuels' firsthand account of his experiences at Durban.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I hope that today's hearing will energize members of this Commission and members of the advocacy community to redouble their efforts to oppose anti-Semitism in all its forms, and to continue to pressure OSCE participating States to crack down on anti-Semitism violence and discrimination whenever it occurs.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS,  
COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this very important hearing on Escalating Anti-Semitic Violence in Europe. Recent reports and news articles reveal a very disturbing trend in Europe of attacks against specific religious and ethnic groups. Shockingly, many attacks have centered upon Jewish communities in Europe. Authorities in Europe have responded strongly to the attacks through public condemnation and security measures. Unfortunately, the anti-Semitic attacks could signal an increase in future violations of religious freedom in Europe as a whole.

As documented in numerous reports over the years, attacks against one particular group of ethnic and religious minorities often signals an increase in religious freedom and other human rights violations by governments or communities. In the former Soviet Union, for example, attacks on Jehovah's Witnesses or Seventh Day Adventists often came at the beginning of a wider campaign to limit religious freedom of minority groups. Religious freedom violations, however, have not only happened in the former Soviet Union, but also have occurred in Eastern Europe, Central Europe and Western Europe including France, Germany, Belgium, and Austria. Anti-sect legislation often was imposed based on hearsay stories about various religious groups. In Belgium, officials promoting limits on religious freedom added Charismatic Catholics and Orthodox Jews to their "bad guy" lists on the basis of hearsay evidence. One secret report alleged that Orthodox Jews stapled their children's fingers together. Sadly, ridiculous charges like these have helped form the basis of some government policies. Unfortunately, ludicrous charges like these also reflect societal attitudes, as seen in attacks against evangelical Christians, Seventh Day Adventists, Scientologists, and others. The recent outbreak of anti-Semitism may have been building for some years.

Mr. Chairman, racist, prejudicial attitudes and criminal action resulting from societal attitudes must be strongly addressed, particularly in light of Europe's history. I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses about effective methods of addressing and countering anti-Semitism. Mr. Chairman, in the face of such events, we cannot stand by in silence.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF  
HON. STENY H. HOYER,  
COMMISSIONER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this timely and important hearing.

More than a decade ago, thanks to the outstanding leadership of my good friend, Ambassador Max Kampelman, and the contribution of Public Members like Judge Thomas Buergenthal, the OSCE participating States adopted the first international agreement to condemn anti-Semitism. That agreement, the 1990 Copenhagen Document, may be more relevant today than at any time since its adoption.

Like many others, I have been shocked and outraged by the tide of anti-Semitic violence which has swept over Europe in the past several weeks. According to press accounts, there have been more than 300 incidents of attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions in France since early April. In Belgium, there have been more than six attacks on the Jewish community, including the burning of a bookstore and a shooting at a synagogue, and similarly violent attacks against individuals and synagogues have occurred in Germany, Russia and Ukraine as well.

In countries experiencing such acts, national, local and community leaders must condemn anti-Semitism in the strongest terms and act swiftly to bring to justice those who would commit violent crimes—not excuse those activities as youthful excesses and hooliganism.

Such a response is to be expected from democratic governments and civilized society. Indeed, the OSCE participating States have pledged, in the Copenhagen Document, to do no less: All OSCE countries must take effective measures to protect individuals and their property from violence as a result of their racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious identity. The obligation to speak out against anti-Semitism—even when it does not rise to levels of violence—is one that must never be shirked. For to do so is to abdicate the most fundamental obligation of any government: the obligation to protect its citizens. Mr. Chairman, there is much that I hope we will learn from our witnesses today. I hope our distinguished panel of witnesses will enlighten us regarding the parameters of the current threat to the Jewish community in the region; the connection, if any, of rising anti-Semitism to other worrisome developments, such as the rise of anti-immigrant political parties; and what actions the governments of the OSCE participating States are taking to forcefully condemn and prosecute anti-Semitic violence. Thank you, Mr. Chairman



**PREPARED SUBMISSION OF  
DR. SHIMON SAMUELS,  
DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL LIAISON,  
SIMON WEISENTHAL CENTER—PARIS**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1997, I had the honor to address this Commission on the state of anti-Semitism in the OSCE member-states at that time. Prominent among the potential dangers to the Jewish condition that I then highlighted were Holocaust denial and its relativization; technology in the service of hate, especially via the Internet ; and the spread of fundamentalist Islamic influence

Yet, by the Millennium, only two years ago, peace processes and the bubble of global economic boom implied a new stage in the 2000-year precariousness of Jewish history. There were no more “Jews of oppression” and our destiny and destination had become a matter of choice.

The OSCE was vindicated, as the Jewish condition seemed to be normalized both within its member states as also, apparently, the Jewish state was becoming accepted into the family of nations.

Then came the Intifada, Durban and 9/11, each releasing the old demons awaiting beneath the surface.

The World Conference Against Racism held in Durban last fall hijacked United Nations agencies (especially the Human Rights Commission and UNESCO) into a campaign for the demonization of the Jewish state and, through it, of the Jewish people.

The Friday evening march against racism did not end at the Durban City Hall, but at the Jewish Club and synagogue where Hitler flyers (asking “what if I would have won”) and the Protocols of Zion were distributed. That night, I, as Chair of the Jewish Caucus in Durban, together with our Centre’s Associate Dean, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, saw anti-Israel and anti-Zionist pretexts die at the gates of a synagogue, endorsing a new anti-Semitism under the guise of a human rights solidarity campaign.

Last 11 November, at the UN High Commission for Human Rights Madrid Conference on Religious Intolerance, I heard no protest at the Syrian Ambassador’s call for the exclusion of “a certain arrogant religion that claims itself as chosen.”

Similarly, UNESCO, a propaganda mouthpiece for tyrannies and collaborator in covering up the worst human rights offences, systematically singled out Israel for abuse. I enter into the record an outrageous report to be delivered by Director-General Koichiro Matsuura to the UNESCO Executive Board on 28 May. It condemns Israel for crimes against the Palestinian cultural heritage and deliberate destruction of its educational structure. There is no mention of the devastation of Jewish holy sites or incitement to Jew-hatred in school-texts, media and mosques.

There is neither sensitivity to Jewish victims of terror in Israel, nor of violence against synagogues, not twenty minutes away from UNESCO’s Paris headquarters. Indeed, this Organization, responsible for the culture of peace and dialogue between civilizations, has remained constantly silent on contemporary anti-Semitism.

The critical mass of UN and media pillorying of Israel is validating a slippage to anti-Jewish assaults.

The outbreak of the “Intifada” on 28 September 2000 unleashed a wave of Middle East-related anti-Semitic incidents worldwide.

Among OSCE countries, in the single month of October 2000, the highest numbers of such attacks were perpetrated in France (70), followed by Canada (29), the United States (22), Great Britain (20) and others...

The trend continued throughout 2001 with some 320 reported incidents in France i.e. targeting Jewish institutions (synagogues, schools, cemeteries) and individuals almost daily.

To make matters worse, official French Police statistics have reported over 400 such incidents in the first three months of 2002, rising to a dozen incidents per day in April (i.e. 380 in France topping 127 in Germany and 57 in the United Kingdom). The Wiesenthal Centre therefore decided, for the first time ever, to place a Travel Advisory on its website ([www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com)) suggesting that Jewish visitors to France and Belgium, at this time, proceed with extreme caution.

We are thus making available to you a twenty page analysis, which includes a list of 108 incidents (assaults, violent acts and threats) focusing upon France and Belgium.

Most of these have occurred in neighborhoods where Jews and Moslems live in close propinquity. Indeed, Moslem anti-Jewish activity has increased *pari passim* with the increasing intensity of the Intifada represented through the extreme imagery and anti-Israel hostility of the media.

The post-September 11 U.S.-led “war against terror” has merged the traditional anti-Americanism of the left, and the nationalism of the extreme right with an immediate sympathy for Al-Qa’eda among young socially marginalised Moslems in France.

Much of the anti-Semitic graffiti and mail used such expressions as “Vive Bin-Laden”.

The volume of violent incidents against Jewish targets reached a peak immediately after the attacks on New York and Washington, especially around the New Year and “Yom Kippur” festivals, with a new resurgence following Passover this year.

The climate of threat and hatemongering against Jews in Durban is now replicated in pro-Palestinian demonstrations across Europe, that serve to rally extreme-left, extreme-right and anti-globalization violent elements together with Islamic fundamentalists.

In June 2001, French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, told a Wiesenthal Centre delegation that assaults on Jewish institutions were “only acts of suburban hooliganism.” He rejected any aggravating implications of French policy on the Middle East conflict being interpreted as consistently pro-Arab.

Yet, the Minister for the Interior and for Religions, Daniel Vaillant, on 5 December 2001, reported “a net diminution of anti-Semitic threats and aggressions in the course of 2001, after a peak in 2000 coinciding with the beginning of the Intifada.”

I would call this the black box of denial.

A Jewish school-bus is attacked in suburban Paris. A bullet penetrates the window shield, wounding an 8 year old girl. The Police register the act as “broken windshield.” A Rabbi complains that his wrecked car is scrawled with “Death to the Jews.” The Police note it as “vandalism.” Thus the Interior Ministry reports that hate crimes against Jews “are down” and the media will not touch the issue. But the Wiesenthal Cen-

tre gets daily calls from victims and, in March this year, we organized hearings at Paris City Hall under the auspices of Mayor Bertrand Delanoë.

We cracked open the black box.

On 7 April, we co-sponsored the 200,000 demonstrator march against anti-Semitism in Paris and the media began to make it an issue.

To understand this black box, we must flashback twenty years: from the 3 October 1980 bombing of the Rue Copernic synagogue (when the then Prime Minister's reaction was "a bomb at a synagogue killed innocent Frenchmen") until the 9 August 1982 Rue des Rosiers massacre at Goldenberg's Restaurant, there were 73 shootings and bombings of Jewish targets in Western Europe—of which 29 in France.

They ended with the Israeli 1982 entry into Lebanon and the consequent repatriation of European terrorists from Palestinian training camps in the Southern Lebanon. The French Action Directe, German Baader Meinhoff and Italian Red Brigades now focussed their attacks on banks, embassies and NATO installations. European governments finally took action, for what had started with the Jews had become a scourge for general society.

Also today, the authorities fear the Intifada's arrival in Europe, regardless of the Arab-Israel conflict. Already in Béziers, France, young fundamentalists shot the Deputy-Mayor, several policemen and then themselves, screaming "Allahu Akhbar." Prime Minister Jospin belatedly pleaded that the Middle East be kept out of France.

The Al Qa'eda network was spread across Germany, France, Spain, Italy and the UK. We have shared with the authorities bona fide accounts of radical Imams from Algeria, financed by Iran, preaching hatred of Jews and Christians to young alienated Moslem youth in suburban prayer-halls. We know of weekend cross-Channel excursions of "Jihadist" students between Britain and the Continent.

The Jospin Socialist Government missed a golden opportunity. Had it seriously addressed the anti-Semitism issue, it might have demonstrated an example of strategic planning in regard to the key issue of the Presidential election campaign: insecurity and violence. By failing to do so, Le Pen's National Front stepped into the breach. Many in the Jewish community consider the June Parliamentary elections as a test for their future in France.

On another level, Europeans, still battling with World War Two collective myths of resistance and collaboration with the Nazi occupier, seek absolution by projecting their guilt upon the victim.

Thus, the growth of Holocaust language used to Nazify the Israeli and Judaize the Palestinian.

Notoriously simplistic was a cartoon rendering of the famous photo of the child, under German guns at the fall of the Warsaw Ghetto. By role-reversal, a "keffiyah" headdress was placed on the child and Stars of David upon the Nazis' helmets. This month, Le Monde banalized the Warsaw Ghetto ruins by lampooning it in juxtaposition with a mock scene of Jenin.

The slippery slope from hate-speech to hate-crime is clear. 72 hours after the close of the Durban hate-fest, its virulence struck at the strategic and financial centers of the United States.

If Durban was "Mein-Kampf," then 9/11 was "Kristalnacht," a warning.

What starts with the Jews is a measure, an alarm signalling impending danger for global stability. The new anti-Semitic alliance is bound up with anti-Americanism, under the cover of so-called “anti-globalization.”

The Holocaust, for thirty years, acted as a protective “Teflon” against blatant anti-Semitic expression. That “Teflon” has eroded, and what was considered distasteful and politically incorrect is becoming simply an opinion. But cocktail chatter at fine English dinners can end as Molotov cocktails against synagogues.

“Political correctness” is also ending for others, as tolerance for multiculturalism gives way to populist voices in France, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Portugal and, last week, in the Netherlands. These countries’ Jewish communities can be caught between the rock of radical Islamic violence and the hard-place of a revitalized Holocaust-denying extreme right. Common cause must be sought between the victimized minorities against extremism and fanaticism.

The OSCE Bucharest Declaration of 2001 called for fighting, inter alia, anti-Semitism in the media and to pay it increased attention. Since 1990, our Centre has participated as an NGO at ODIHR Reviews and is familiar with the Copenhagen, Moscow, Lisbon and Istanbul Concluding Documents that propose legal, educational, monitoring and reporting measures, to effectively protect victims of racism, including anti-Semitism, in OSCE member-states.

In that spirit, the Wiesenthal Centre has, last week, co-launched a grass-roots project in the Paris suburbs, “SOS Truth and Security.” Attached is a synthesis of the 39 complaints from victims of anti-Semitism reaching already our hotline.

Volunteer lawyers will accompany each victim to the Police and the local Town Hall. Social workers will address their trauma. The data generated will be analyzed by our Centre and we would be happy to share the findings with this Commission and the OSCE.

Thereby, we urge your constant involvement in cracking open the black box of myopia and prejudice and exposing the consequent dangers that threaten us all.

One scintilla of light broke through the darkness in Durban when a South African black Moslem friend asked me a Jewish riddle: A Rabbi and his students were discussing when does night end and day begin? One student said: “When you can distinguish between a lamb and a goat.” The second said: “When you can distinguish between a fig-tree and an olive-tree.” The Rabbi responded: “No, when you see a black woman and a white woman, when you see a rich man and a poor man and you cannot distinguish between them, then you will know that day has begun!”

Thank you.

**PREPARED SUBMISSION OF  
MARK B. LEVIN,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
NCSJ: ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF JEWS IN RUSSIA, UKRAINE,  
THE BALTIC STATES & EURASIA**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, it is my privilege to appear before you this morning as a supporter and as your partner in the mission to realize the fullest promise of the Helsinki process. The Helsinki Commission is unique in the federal system, uniting the Executive and Legislative Branches with the non-governmental sector, with Commissioners and long-serving staff devoted to the Helsinki process and related international mechanisms.

In large part due to Congressional initiative and the example and vision of this Commission, new U.S. Government partners have arisen to address these concerns. Among these are the U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom, the Office of International Religious Freedom and the Ambassador at Large in the Department of State, the U.S. Government Roundtable on Religious Freedom, and annual reviews such as the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and on Religious Freedom. The involvement of the non-governmental community in each of these processes is a cornerstone of their authority and their success. As you know, NCSJ is an umbrella of nearly 50 national organizations and over 300 local community federations and community councils across the United States. We coordinate and represent the organized American Jewish community on advocacy relating to the former Soviet Union, and our membership includes the American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith International, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, United Jewish Communities, and many other well-known agencies devoted to promoting tolerance and combating prejudice and anti-Semitism around the world. This combined experience and expertise has significantly informed my comments to you today.

**UNEASY PROGRESS**

As this is not the first opportunity I have had to testify before the Commission, let me reflect on an irony from a previous occasion, a Commission hearing from January 15, 1999. We could already see that state-sponsored anti-Semitism was effectively extinct, but that popular anti-Semitism was on an alarming rise in certain quarters of post-Soviet society. At that time, I concluded with the following warning:

Anti-Semitism remains a serious threat in Russia today. Totalitarian philosophies, such as those cited above, are not concerned with human rights, and have negative views toward minority groups. Meanwhile, weak democratic structures exist in the former Soviet Union, allowing the unchecked freedom to propagate ethnic hatred and violence. The Soviet Jewry movement has made great achievements over the past three decades. Now is not the time to let a reactionary voice override these accomplishments. Now is the time for Russia's leadership to exhibit a greater resolve in addressing this issue.

It is critical that the Russian government understand the importance of its commitment to human rights and the rule of law, and that it adhere to that commitment. It is critical that Russia develop the necessary infrastructure to support economic development, and guarantee

law enforcement and the protection of civil rights of all its citizens. It is critical to advocate the prosecution of anyone, from common citizen to government official, who propagates ethnic hatred. This is the time to send a strong message to Russia, denouncing the growing anti-Semitism and urge these officials to take concrete action to eradicate anti-Semitism.

The news I bring you today is better, if not entirely comforting—better than three years ago, and better as well than at this moment in the established democracies of Western Europe. Who would have thought that the concerns I just recalled from 1999 would become so immediate throughout the European continent?

Yevgeny Satanovsky, President of the Russian Jewish Congress, suggested an explanation for this seeming discrepancy between East and West: While Russians and others in the successor states have only recently begun learning lessons of the Holocaust, Western Europeans may already be forgetting those same necessary lessons. Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar of Russia spoke out last year when extremist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky dismissed the significance of the Holocaust for Russians: “The memory of the Holocaust is a guarantee of democratic changes in our country and that it will never again turn back toward totalitarianism and any forms of hatred,” Rabbi Lazar said.

I doubt whether anyone present here today has ever taken Western European enlightenment for granted, however, least of all the member organizations of NCSJ. This would be a luxury we cannot afford, as for us the lessons of the Holocaust and repeated persecution will always run deep.

What positive example can Western Europe offer to its eastern neighbors? Surely, many cultural and political accomplishments come to mind. Yet, when it comes to sensitivity on minority issues, sadly Western Europe has taken too much for granted. Thus it is not surprising that Russians can defend restrictions on minority faiths by pointing to comparable practices in France, Belgium, and Germany. Nor is it surprising when successor states defend votes in favor of anti-Israel and seemingly anti-Semitic United Nations resolutions by claiming to follow ‘the Western European example.’

The repeal of the infamous “Zionism is Racism” resolution by the United Nations, passed the same year the Helsinki Final Act was signed, meant anti-Semites would have one less weapon in their arsenal of legitimacy. Last summer’s World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, threatened to restore some of this respectability.

Those of us in this room who confronted the Soviet-era Anti-Zionist Committee and other stale canards know the lengths to which anti-Semitic movements can hide behind the popular labels of “anti-Zionism”. To those who would disavow any connection to anti-Semitism, we can safely reply: We know it when we see it. My colleagues, from B’nai B’rith and Hadassah to the Anti-Defamation League and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, saw it and heard it in Durban. My colleagues at United Nations Watch in Geneva experience it year-round. These international assemblies are political and intellectual feeding tubes to millions around the world, and we must continue our combined efforts to keep out the hate and inject the spirit of tolerance and humanity.

Let me devote a few more moments to irony. At a March 2002 conference in Bucharest, organized by the American Jewish Committee, Latvian Jewish leader Gregory Krupnikov remarked, “There is no state anti-Semitism. Obviously there is some level of public ‘street’ anti-

Semitism, although it does not differ from the degree of anti-Semitism that typically exists in Europe.” Fortunately, Latvia has not experienced “the degree of anti-Semitism” that has prevailed in Europe in the weeks since the Bucharest conference.

In conjunction with the annual International Leadership Conference of the American Jewish Committee, my colleagues and I had the opportunity earlier this month to consult with community leaders from six of the successor states, including Russian and Ukraine, and with leaders like Mr. Krupnikov from the communities in Latvia and Lithuania. Each of these activists, for whom the Holocaust and Stalinism are local landmarks, pointed to the ironic situation in which roles have been reversed. While in 1999, most Jewish leaders in the successor states saw a promising peace process in the Middle East and sought assistance with anti-Semitism at home, today they freely mobilize political support for an Israel under assault and consider how they can assist their Western European brethren cope with unchecked violence and hate.

How ironic that Latvia, so long under the yoke of Soviet occupation and the site of the worst kinds of atrocities during the Holocaust, should have been among the few courageous nations in Durban to vocally denounce the anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish draft platform of the World Conference. How ironic that, while France struggles to keep its balance between the fascist super-candidacy of Jean-Marie le Pen and the unbridled attacks on Jews by North African and Muslim gangs, it is Russia whose President—Vladimir Putin—denounces xenophobia and pogroms in his recent State of the Nation address to the Duma. How ironic that it is President Putin who is now pushing the Duma to pass new anti-extremist legislation.

Behind this irony lie decades of hard work by this Commission and many U.S. Government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and by their counterparts in the former Soviet Union. This work is far from complete, and we must not allow the latest Western European eruption of anti-Semitism to make us forget about the very real and ongoing societal undercurrent of anti-Semitism which persists especially in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova.

We hold these post-Soviet governments accountable on efforts to condition public attitudes through education and public statements, and we challenge them to enact and enforce laws to protect minorities and others. We do not judge their societies by how they found them among the shards of Soviet tyranny, we judge them by their commitment to moving forward.

The 1990 Copenhagen Document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe commits the parties to “take effective measures, including the adoption, in conformity with their constitutional systems and their international obligations, of such laws as may be necessary, to provide protection against any acts that constitute incitement to violence against persons or groups based on national, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination, hostility or hatred, including anti-Semitism...” This is a standard we have applied as a nation again and again.

Incidents, legislation and statements do not tell the full story. The counter-factuals are also instructive: the appeals to anti-Semitism which were not evident during Ukraine’s recent national elections; the rela-

tive lack of serious incidents in Russia during last month's anniversary of Adolf Hitler's birthday. As we hold nations accountable for their failures, we must also recognize their successes.

The status of anti-Semitism cannot only be measured by the number or severity of incidents. It resides in the comfortable privacy of prejudices and whispers, and in the public insinuation of veiled references and calls for order or revolution. In September 1999, the Anti-Defamation League released results of its "Survey on Anti-Semitism and Societal Attitudes in Russia." The poll of 1,528 adults found that 44 percent of Russians hold strong anti-Semitic views. Such studies are vital to assessing the scope of the problem, refining and targeting efforts to counter anti-Semitism and xenophobia, and measuring the progress. The ADL study represents an important baseline for future research in this area.

### THE SCOPE OF ANTI-SEMITISM

I have provided, as a separate attachment,\* a sampling of anti-Semitic activities that occurred in the former Soviet Union over the past year. Many incidents go unreported, or uninvestigated by law enforcement, but these selected items highlight the shape of current trends in the region.

I also wish to submit the summary of a recent report by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), detailing anti-Semitism in Russia during 2001. As the ADL summary points out:

It is believed that current Russian leadership's positive attitude toward Jewish life is a key factor helping to increase ethnic and religious tolerance and to improve the acceptance of Jews in the general society. Yet, serious steps against various manifestations of aggressive nationalism have yet to be taken on both the federal and local levels.

Our reports focus on the significant acts of anti-Semitism. As in the United States, many random and minor acts occur in the way of vandalism or insults. Incidents of a more serious nature involve physical harm, organized violence, systematic threats, public demonstrations, or inflammatory remarks by public officials. Enactment and enforcement of appropriate laws must be combined with forceful public condemnation by officials of such acts.

The following examples highlight the nature of recent incidents in the former Soviet Union:

#### 2001

- Russia, May: The Duma rejected a motion condemning anti-Semitism and fascism.
- Ukraine, July: The Monastery of the Caves, a historic Orthodox church in Kyiv, printed a pamphlet with strong anti-Semitic language.
- Russia, July: Arsonists attempted to burn down a synagogue in Kostroma.
- Russia, December: Yekaterinberg Prosecutor's Office charged the local Orthodox diocese of Yekaterinburg with distributing *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

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\* NCSJ, "Selected Recent Incidents in the Former Soviet Union," May 2002.



**2002**

- Russia, January: David Duke sold his newest book in the Russian Duma.
- Ukraine, February: Some 200 people participated in an anti-Semitic demonstration in Lviv.
- Belarus, March: Officials approved demolition of a historic synagogue to make way for the construction of apartments.
- Russia, April: A homemade explosive charge detonated near the Krasnoyarsk synagogue.
- Russia, April: The head of the Jewish community in Ulyanovsk was severely beaten by a radical right-wing thug.
- Ukraine, April 13: Fifty youth marched two miles to get to attack the Kyiv synagogue. Groups of youths beat at least two victims, the Head of the Lubavitch Yeshiva and the son of Kyiv Chief Rabbi Moshe-Reuven Asman.

While Russia's new anti-extremism legislation is a positive development, its recent introduction fails to redress the many instances of political anti-Semitism and racism, whether they occur in parliamentary sessions or through regional legislation. And during the many months and years that the Russian administration and Duma have deliberated on or failed to pass such legislation, the Jewish community and other minority groups have suffered threats, instances of vandalism, and violent physical attacks. In some cases, communities have appealed to municipal and federal authorities, with little success, or the victims have encountered apathy or hostility from police investigating these crimes. In fewer cases have police protection and arrests of perpetrators been forthcoming.

The sources of anti-Semitism differ from country to country. While older Russians retain the anti-Semitism born of communism and the youth have adopted fascist dogma, Ukrainian nationalists have used anti-Communist appeals to anti-Semitism. Such variations have not, however, prevented Russian National Unity from gaining a foothold in other successor states.

Josef Zissels, Chairman of the Vaad of Ukraine, has explained the distinction between his country's approach and that of Russia: While Russians have seen Jews as agents in defeating Russia's national goal of empire, many Ukrainians see Jews as a key bridge to their own national goal of integrating with the West.

In Armenia, some are using Israel's close relationship with Turkey to fan the flames of anti-Semitism among Armenia's younger generation.

**RESPONSE TO ANTI-SEMITISM**

The nature of anti-Semitism in the Soviet successor states is notably different from Western European manifestations in two respects—the relative absence of a Middle Eastern or North African connection to the violence, and the absence of a clear pattern or motivation.

In a further ironic twist, it is the national political leaders in the former Soviet Union—the historic hotbed of popular anti-Semitism—more than Western Europe who are speaking out strongly against anti-Semitism and xenophobia. Unfortunately, most of Russia's local and regional leaders have not followed suit.

These ironies in no way minimize the remaining challenges in the former Soviet republics. We need to continue supporting programs that foster tolerance and understanding, public campaigns to lift the cloak of legitimacy from those resorting to anti-Semitism, official condemnations of actions or statements that diminish the humanity of any individual or group, and legal and institutional commitment to this cause.

#### RUSSIA

In his November 13, 2001, letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell, in the context of discussions to “graduate” Russia from the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov wrote: “The fundamental objectives of our policies are to ensure personal freedom, prevent intolerance based on race, religion, and ethnicity, and our migration practices are fully compliant with the international standards... I would like to reaffirm our firm commitment to these principles, which we consider an indispensable condition for Russia’s existence and development as a multi-ethnic country and the development of a civil society on the basis of generally recognized rules of international law and universal morality.” Our decades-long insistence on human rights and minority protection as the touchstone for integration into the West is beginning to pay off on a national level, and we must ensure that it filters out to the regions as well.

The U.S. Congress most recently reaffirmed this American commitment with the introduction of Senate Resolution 234, “Reiterating the sense of the Senate that religious freedom is a priority of the United States in the bilateral relationship with the Russian Federation, including within the context of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.” It is no coincidence that this Resolution, introduced with 26 additional cosponsors, was originated by Senators Gordon Smith and Hillary Rodham Clinton—both Members of the Helsinki Commission.

As I mentioned previously, Russian President Vladimir Putin included the following call in his April 18 State of the Nation Address to the State Duma:

The growth of extremism poses a serious threat to stability and public security in the country. Above all, I mean those who stage pogroms and beat and kill people under fascist and nationalist slogans and symbols. But the police and public prosecutors often do not have adequate instruments making it possible to bring the organizers and inspirers of such crimes to justice. In many cases only immediate perpetrators stand trial. In point of fact, however, extremist bands act as organized communities of criminals and are, therefore, subject to similar prosecution. A draft bill concerning the struggle with extremism will soon be put before the State Duma.

#### UKRAINE

As I have noted, the campaigns for the March 31 Ukrainian elections were notably devoid of significant anti-Semitic incidents or appeals. In Kyiv last month, dozens of youth marched across town from a football stadium to the historic Brodsky synagogue, where they beat two members of the Jewish community, shouted anti-Semitic slogans, and smashed windows in the synagogue; police responded with rapid arrests, although they discounted anti-Semitism as a motive.

These and other incidents should be understood within the broader context of a sweeping revival of Jewish life. Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, in a December 17 letter to President Bush concerning his own nation's efforts to be "graduated" from the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, stressed the following points:

On my part, I deem it important to underline that during the years of independence our state, perhaps the only one of the post-Soviet countries, not only managed to maintain inter-ethnic peace and tolerance among the religious confessions, but also established conditions for the development of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities. This task is one of the major constitutional duties of the state...

The state pays special attention to creation of tolerant relations between representatives of different nationalities and confessions as well as preventing extremism and anti-Semitism. As a result of such a policy, no facts of antagonism on the ground of anti-Semitism nor bias attitude toward members of Jewish public and religious organizations have been reported in the last years. I take this opportunity to inform you of the preparation to the anti-Fascist congress "For a World Without Terrorism, Xenophobia and Chauvinism" to be held in Kyiv on the initiative of influential Jewish organization and under my patronage.

#### LITHUANIA

As an example of the situation in the Baltic States, I wish to cite from a report delivered at the Bucharest conference by Emanuelis Zingeris, Chairman of the Foundation for Jewish Cultural Heritage in Lithuania and a former leading Member of the Lithuanian Seimas:

Lithuanian intellectuals of the older generation would argue that only the appearance of anti-Semitism exists in their country, and that casual, marginal hatred of Jews has no significance. However, a poll taken two years ago by the leading Lithuanian daily, *Lietuvos Rytas*, revealed Jews to be among Lithuania's least popular national minorities, surpassed only by Roma. The results showed that despite the increasing availability of information on Jews, typified by the government's highly promoted release of new textbooks with a more in-depth treatment of Jewish history and the Holocaust, some anti-Semitic attitudes still prevail in Lithuania.

At the same time, anti-Semitic stereotypes are slowly fading from the parlance of the educated youth. The language of the mass media has become less crude in the last two or more years, although anti-Semitic content resurfaces with unexpected force in public discussions on the Middle East, particularly in anonymous exchanges on the Internet...

In my view, anti-Semitism has not disappeared—it just has acquired a more latent form. It may appear, for example, in public attitudes and official statements against the restoration of the Vilnius Jewish historical quarter. The surge in anti-Semitic expression that occurs in Internet discussions on the Middle East is remarkable, though.

#### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The following points are recommendations to make these post-Soviet societies more open and to cement the gains to date:

- The need to monitor incidents and attitudes, practices and policies, in the successor states has never been so obvious in light of the alarming developments to their west. Monitoring empowers

local activists, it compels our diplomats to become experts and advocates in this area, and it reminds foreign governments and societies that these issues are integral to the Western culture they seek to emulate.

- Legislation to counter extremism and racial violence is also gaining support in the region, as evidenced by the new Russian proposal. Religion laws that set up two classes of religion—traditional and non-traditional—or abdicate decision-making authority to local officials give further credence to the notion that the state can decide which religious groups are legitimate and which are non-legitimate.
- Without enforcement of laws on the national and local level, obviously, no legislation can have an impact. This requires active supervision by senior officials, as well as training programs for police, government workers and community leaders in tolerance and in combating hate crimes.
- Without an effective court system, either violators go free or public opinion doubts the fairness of their sentencing. This may be the most neglected facet of efforts to reduce outbreaks of anti-Semitism and xenophobia, and to transform post-Soviet societies. If judges cannot become role models, their statements and decisions ultimately have little impact.
- Public education efforts are gaining momentum, particularly in the Baltic States which are teaching children the lessons of the Holocaust, and the United States would do well to redouble support for such efforts. To be truly successful and far-reaching, these efforts must be undertaken at the earliest possible age, but should also encompass opportunities for adult learning.
- The 'bully pulpit' is not only available to presidents. Public statements by government leaders at every level are indispensable to motivating society, bureaucracies, and legislators. Official condemnation of anti-Semitism and calls for greater protection of minorities help shape public attitudes and reduce ambiguity.
- American leaders as well have made important public statements. President Bush is now departing for Europe, where he will join non-governmental leaders in Moscow and visit the Choral Synagogue in St. Petersburg. Beyond what either President Bush or Putin will say, such meetings constitute statements in themselves. Although American statements—including Congressional letters and resolutions—reflect the values of our society, Russian statements may reflect the values to which that society aspires. These gestures and messages carry great weight.
- Religious leaders must also take responsibility. The Lithuanian Catholic Church condemned anti-Semitism at a March 2000 bishops' conference, and expressed regret that during the German occupation "a portion of the faithful failed to demonstrate charity to the persecuted Jews, did not grasp any opportunity to defend them, and lacked the determination to influence those who aided the Nazis." The Russian Jewish Congress has made some progress in bringing together religious leaders of major faith communities in Russia, including the Orthodox Church as well as others not recognized as "traditional" denominations in the 1997 Law on Religion. In March, U.S. Ambassador Alexander Vershbow convened

an inter-religious panel in Kazan, with the representative of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia, the Islamic Mufti, and the Archbishop of Kazan and Tatarstan.

In all of these pursuits, have no doubt that the member agencies of NCSJ and our member communities throughout the United States are already engaged and willing to step forward to share their experience and expertise. Several organizations have major projects underway in the successor states, as well as in Central and Western Europe. Numerous communities in the United States have partnership programs with sister communities in the former Soviet Union.

We can also challenge our Western European allies to apply these approaches to their own societies and to increase assistance to their eastern neighbors in the same regard. Despite the latest outbreak in the West, or perhaps because of it, there may be homegrown European approaches to this dangerous phenomenon. Through assemblies of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), this Commission could pursue discussions along these lines. In any international forum, not only in the OSCE but in the United Nations and related organs, countries must be held to a high standard in their speeches and voting.

I testified in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 5, 2000, on the subject of anti-Semitism, in a hearing chaired by Senator Smith who is with us today and who has proven himself a tireless champion and genuine ally in this cause. In my statement then, I cited a lesson from the late Ambassador Morris Abram, a leader in the American civil rights movement and in so many American, Jewish and international causes—including the Soviet Jewry movement and NCSJ:

Responsible for the famous 1963 “one man, one vote” landmark Supreme Court ruling, Morris Abram maintained that appeals to racism and bigotry are effective only so long as society tolerates it. As America’s opinion-leaders began making clear in the 1960s that racist rhetoric was unacceptable, mainstream politicians and others stopped using it. In much the same way, delivering a strong, public and consistent message to Russian society is the most obvious way for Russian leaders to impact the public attitudes that reward anti-Semitic and xenophobic appeals.

We still have far to go in Russia and the other successor states. But at some point, we must be able to discern whether the policies of our government and civil society are having an impact, and whether the efforts of post-Soviet society are also bearing fruit. Rather than inviting complacency by comparison with the current unrest elsewhere, the real progress in these countries further obligates us to continue outreach and education, cooperation and admonition, recognition and critique. It obligates those societies and their governments as well.

**MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD  
BY MARK B. LEVIN**

**SELECTED RECENT INCIDENTS IN  
THE FORMER SOVIET UNION  
A REPORT OF NCSJ: NCSJ: ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF JEWS  
IN RUSSIA, UKRAINE, THE BALTIC STATES & EURASIA  
MAY 2002**

**VIOLENCE  
2001**

**Belarus, November:** A Jewish man is attacked by a group of unidentified people, and subsequently hospitalized in serious condition. Events preceding the attack suggest it was anti-Semitic in nature: thugs dressed in black stalking the man and his wife, telephoned threats, and anti-Semitic graffiti on their apartment door.

**2002**

**Russia, April 22:** The head of the Jewish community in Ulyanovsk is severely beaten by a radical right-wing youth.

**Lithuania, April 8-12:** Lithuanian Parliament members make anti-Semitic remarks in session in connection with Israel's Holocaust Memorial Day.

**Ukraine, April 13:** Fifty youth marched through the streets of Kyiv for two miles to the historic Brodsky Synagogue, where they smashed windows with rocks and shouted violently anti-Semitic phrases. They beat at least two victims, the Head of the Lubavitch Yeshiva and the son of Kyiv Chief Rabbi Moshe-Reuven Asman. Official response was swift - eight arrests were made almost immediately. However, official police reports also characterized the attacks as "brutal hooliganism" coming in the wake of a local soccer game rather than as premeditated anti-Semitism.

**POLITICAL ANTI-SEMITISM**

**2001**

**Russia, February:** Kremlin intensifies efforts to choose Jewish leadership, combined with efforts throughout 2000 to harass those Jewish groups out of favor.

**Russia, April:** Several Duma deputies, including ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, refuse to hold a moment of silence in the Duma for Holocaust Remembrance Day.

**Russia, May:** Nikolai Denisov (former aide to Krasnodar Governor and vocal anti-Semite Konstantin Kodratenko) accused of anti-Semitism as Krasnodar's candidate to the State Duma. He wins election to the Duma.

**Russia, May 18:** Duma rejects motion condemning anti-Semitism and fascism in Russia.

**Russia, November 6:** Duma Deputy Nikolai Denisov employs strongly anti-Semitic rhetoric in Duma session.

**2002**

**Russia, January:** American David Duke sells his newest book in the Russian Duma and reportedly garners support from many Duma members.

**Ukraine, February 26:** A parliamentary candidate for the Ivano-Frankivsk region makes virulently anti-Semitic remarks and gestures on local television.

**Russia, February 28:** The new People's Patriotic Party led by Igor Rodionov and other party officials quoted in the Russian press making blatantly anti-Semitic statements.

**Latvia, March:** Commemoration of SS Unit causes controversy.

**Belarus, March:** Property listed on historic register as a synagogue is deregistered by Belarusian officials and demolished to make way for the construction of apartment blocks.

**Lithuania, April 16:** Saulis Ozelis, the Chairman of a radical right-wing group, burns the Israeli flag at the town square in the town of Taurage to protest the return of property to the local Jewish community.

**Russia, April 19:** A homemade device explodes near the synagogue in Krasnoyarsk. Community leaders suspect the incident is tied to events marking Hitler's birthday.

**Russia, April 23:** The Volgograd Regional Administration cancels an anti-Semitic program broadcast on an Administration-owned channel and threatens to stop funding to the anti-Semitic newspaper *The Cossack Circle*, in response to repeated appeals by the Jewish community. The editor of *The Cossack Circle* retires as a result.

**Ukraine, March:** Ivano-Frankivsk City Council proposes to grant World War II SS (Halychyna) division veterans status of 'freedom fighters'. Heated criticism from Jewish and non-Jewish groups in Ukraine and Russia leads Council to scrap the proposal.

#### THREATS/PROPAGANDA 2001

**Ukraine, July 27:** The historic Orthodox Church known as the Monastery of the Caves, in Kyiv, prints a pamphlet with strong anti-Semitic language.

**Ukraine, November:** Communist Pavlo Baulin, a Ukrainian Rada Member, delivers an address before the Ukrainian House of Representatives in which he claims that "the Jewish-Gay Mafia" has gained control of state funds.

**Latvia, December:** Yakov Pliner, a Jewish Member of Parliament and frequent target of anti-Semitic mail, alerts the police to two pieces of particularly vicious hate mail.

#### 2002

**Ukraine, February 20:** Some 200 people participate in an anti-Semitic demonstration in the Ukrainian city of Lviv. The demonstration was organized by the Organization of Idealistic Ukrainians, which publishes the virulently anti-Semitic newspaper *The Idealist*.

**Lithuania, March 26:** At a basketball game in Vilnius between the local team and an Israeli team, some of the Lithuanian fans yell anti-Semitic epithets at the opposing squad.

**Lithuania, April 20:** The radical right-wing Freedom Union, denounces the return of Jewish property in strong anti-Semitic language.

**Ukraine, April:** A Jewish organization in Kharkiv receives an anonymous e-mail threatening an attack ('pogrom') on April 20, Hitler's birthday.

**Russia, April 24:** Man calls in bomb threat against Moscow's Marina Roscha synagogue.

#### VANDALISM 2001

**Russia, July:** Suspicious fire causes extensive damage to Kazan's Jewish Day School. Kazan city administration attempts to block rebuilding efforts for over a month. School is provided temporary location following lobbying by Israeli, German, U.S. and Russian governments. Kazan administration promises that permanent location will be found for school during 2002.

**Russia, July:** Moscow Anti-Defamation League reports vandalism of a monument to Holocaust victims in Smolensk.

**Ukraine, Since the end of October 2001:** The offices of the Jewish Agency in Chernihiv have been experiencing harassment by skinheads, who repeatedly come to the office, curse workers and others who come to the building, smear defamatory graffiti on the walls and throw stones. Past break-ins have also been attributed to skinhead activity.

#### 2002

**Belarus, February 15:** Swastikas are marked on a subway station in Minsk, and the Russian National Unity party hands out literature on their nationalist, anti-Semitic platform.

**Belarus, April:** Cemetery in Vitebsk is vandalized several times. Authorities accused of doing little to find perpetrators and prevent future such attacks.

**Russia, March 31:** Skinheads vandalize synagogue in Kostroma.

**Russia, April 16:** Radical right-wing elements attack the building of the Hesed Jewish charitable organization in the town of Taganrog, smashing windows and stealing plaques from the wall. Anti-Semitic slogans frequently appear on the building's walls.

**Russia, April 22:** "Death to the Jews" is written on a wall of the Perm synagogue.

**Russia, May 7:** A synagogue door in Rostov is set on fire on Saturday. Two hours later, a window at the synagogue was shattered.

**Ukraine, April 22:** The Jewish community of Mykolayiv reports that a synagogue window was smashed with a rock, just missing the rabbi, who was inside.

#### OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF CONCERN

**Russia:** Krasnodar Governor Aleksander Tkatchov has systematically deprived minority groups in the region of basic civil rights, and has recently made legal their deportation from Krasnodar. Governor Tkatchov has also reportedly failed to prevent frequent well-organized attacks by Cossack militia groups on these groups.

**Russia and Ukraine:** In the wake of numerous skinhead attacks on foreigners and people of dark complexion around the time of Hitler's birthday, numerous articles in the Russian and Ukrainian press questioned official motives for condemning such extremism, and even questioned the existence of racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism in those countries.



**ANTI-SEMITISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN RUSSIA IN 2001:  
AN OVERVIEW  
A REPORT OF THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE**

Anti-Semitism remains one of the most common expressions of ethnic and religious intolerance and bias in Russia. Despite its specific characteristics and historical uniqueness, in contemporary Russian situation anti-Semitism often represents a broader phenomenon of xenophobia and intolerance that still remain widespread in Russia.

For most of Russian history of the last two centuries, anti-Semitism was official or semi-official government policy. Since the beginning of the policy of reforms instituted by Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980's, and especially after the fall of Soviet Union in 1991, anti-Semitism has no longer been employed by the state or any branch of power in Russian Federation. Jewish roots no longer hinder careers, college acceptance or holding of key posts with the government institutions to which there are numerous examples.

While life has dramatically improved for Russian Jews since the fall of the Soviet Union, both in their ability to practice their religion and to emigrate if they chose, most Russian Jews still believe anti-Semitism remains a threat.

In present-day Russia, anti-Semitism continues to express itself through the activism of nationalist and extremist organizations, in various publications, and most recently via the Internet. The government of Russia appears to realize the threat anti-Semitism is posing to the Jewish minority as well as to the foundations of the nascent Russian civil society. In 2001, Russian President Vladimir Putin made a number of statements to this effect.

It is believed that current Russian leadership's positive attitude toward Jewish life is a key factor helping to increase ethnic and religious tolerance and to improve the acceptance of Jews in the general society.

Yet, serious steps against various manifestations of aggressive nationalism have yet to be taken on both the federal and local levels.

The presence of anti-Semitic attitudes, prejudices and beliefs across the social spectrum of Russian society usually has an indirect effect on the actual Jewish community. Outbreaks of anti-Semitic violence were relatively rare in 2001. The major concern of the Jewish community in Russia and beyond its borders remains a generally lax response on both federal and local levels when an anti-Semitic incident does take place or anti-Semitic activities are exposed. Russian civil and criminal legislation provide sufficient grounds for prosecution of those responsible for hate crimes - which constitute a punishable misdemeanor in Russia. In reality, however, legal actions are rarely taken against any of the suspects in hate crimes. Such attitude toward hate-based crimes is evident on the part of the police and the prosecutors who are responsible for the investigative process. As a rule, Russian courts also take a relatively lax attitude toward acts motivated by bigotry, and very few cases of this nature have ever ended up in court.

The general level of violent attacks against Jews and Jewish property in 2001 remained consistent with the data gathered and published by the Anti-Defamation League and other Jewish and human rights agencies for the previous year.

The major international developments that seriously affected anti-Jewish activities worldwide in 2001, the ongoing Palestinian intifada, the September 11th attack in the United States and the subsequent US-led international war on terrorism, all had a relatively minor effect on anti-Semitic activities in Russia.

In the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks on the United States, some growth in anti-Semitic and nationalist violence has been recorded across the Russian Federation. A series of violent anti-Semitic attacks perpetrated in the course of two weeks was seen as a ripple effect of the September 11 attacks in the U.S. and the subsequent growth of minority bashing across much of Europe. In one incident, a gang of skinheads attacked four yeshiva students in Moscow. On the same day, Jewish school pupils were assaulted in the city of Orenburg, in eastern Russia, and hooligans attacked a rabbi and four Israeli Jews in the city of Omsk, in Siberia. Hooligans drew swastikas and scrawled anti-Semitic graffiti on the gate of the central synagogue in Moscow, and the next day cut a swastika into the front door of the offices of a religious Jewish umbrella organization in the Russian capital.

The most serious hate incident of the year (which did not involve anti-Semitism) took place in Moscow on October 30. Three people were killed and twenty-two injured when about 300 young people stormed an open-air market, attacking dark-skinned vendors and passers-by. The attackers, mostly teenagers, were soccer fans. Both city and federal authorities promptly condemned this racially motivated act of violence, and police made arrests. A group of suspects in the crime is now awaiting trial at a Moscow court.

#### **VIOLENCE AGAINST JEWS, JEWISH INSTITUTIONS AND PROPERTY**

The number of major violent attacks on Jews and Jewish property in 2001 stood at about the same level recorded by the Anti-Defamation League a year earlier, the first time that ADL applied its years-long expertise to monitoring of anti-Semitic incidents to Russia.

Twenty-four major attacks on Jews and Jewish property were reported during the year, compared to 18 incidents in 2000. Like a year before, it is widely believed in the Jewish community and among human rights groups that many more incidents, especially cases involving personal harassment, remain unreported to police, human rights watchdogs or Jewish organizations.

There were four cases involving violence against individuals on the basis of their Jewish religion or ethnicity, compared to two cases a year ago and one two years ago.

The number of incidents involving vandalism of Jewish cemeteries, usually one of the most common types of hate crimes, increased from 2 in 2000 to 5 in 2001. Two synagogues were targeted by arsonists last year, the same number as a year before. Last year vandals in five cities also attacked other types of Jewish institutions, such as charities, schools and offices of Jewish organizations.

Anti-Semitic incidents occurred in at least thirteen cities across the country in 2001, compared to nine locations a year before and seven in 1999.

Among the incidents that took place in 2001 were:

- the beating of Orthodox Jewish schoolboys in Moscow in September
- the beating of Jewish school pupils the city of Orenburg in September
- the racially-motivated beating of a 56-year old Jewish man in Moscow in July
- arson attack on a synagogue in Kostroma in July
- vandalism in Jewish cemeteries in Perm, Arzamas, Velikie Luki, Krasnoyarsk, Saratov
- two subsequent attacks on the new synagogue in Tyumen carried out by a local neo-Nazi skinhead group in October.

**PREPARED SUBMISSION OF  
ALEXANDRA ARRIAGA,  
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS,  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA**

**OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission, thank you for the opportunity to testify at this important hearing.

Amnesty International is concerned by the prevalence of anti-Semitism today and the disturbing wave of incidents occurring in Europe in recent months. Amnesty International strongly condemns all anti-Semitic acts and firmly opposes the recent wave of attacks in Europe. These acts are violations of the most fundamental human rights committed on the basis of an individual's religion or identity. Not only is the victim harmed, but also the community, which becomes the target of fear, intimidation, and other forms of harassment. These attacks demonstrate the depths of intolerance against religious, racial, cultural and national differences and the dangers intolerance breeds. Amnesty International unconditionally opposes anti-Semitism, and all such racist and threatening acts.

Mr. Chairman, I will focus my remarks on general trends and possible contributing factors, comment on government responses, and offer policy recommendations.

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

Throughout the last forty years, Amnesty International has monitored human rights violations around the world and witnessed the persistence of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism. Since its founding in 1961, Amnesty International has worked on religious freedom and religious persecution issues and has called for the unconditional release of any person imprisoned for freedom of conscience, including religion. The first Amnesty International conference was a Conference on Religious Persecution, held in Paris in 1961, and the first of the organization's investigative missions was in 1961 to Czechoslovakia to document and protest the imprisonment of Archbishop Beran and to gather information about the conditions of other religious prisoners.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Amnesty International took up cases of persecution against Jews and other religious minorities. Amnesty International was especially active in spotlighting the cases of Jewish Refuseniks, speaking out against their harassment, intimidation, and beatings; opposing the house searches, and intimidation in synagogues; and calling for their immediate release from psychiatric hospitals and labor camps. Amnesty International persistently raised these cases with officials and helped bring public attention to the climate of persecution and discrimination against Jews and other targeted minorities.

Today, Amnesty International continues to advocate for the rights of individuals who face harassment and persecution because of their faith or identity. We currently are working on behalf of the attacks on Jews in Russia, Jehovah's witnesses in Armenia and Azerbaijan, Baptists in Turkmenistan, Copts in Egypt, Baha'is in Iran, minority Shiites in Saudi Arabia, Christians and Tibetans in China, Muslims in Uzbekistan, Catholics in Vietnam, to name just a few examples. And throughout its

history, Amnesty International has had occasion to condemn anti-Semitic acts against Jews or Jewish property the world over. But there is more we need to do.

This year, the organization has set a course to redouble its efforts to collect information on recent attacks, document incidents, monitor the progress by officials investigating the cases, and take further action as needed to ensure victims are protected and perpetrators are brought to justice. We are also launching two campaigns in the months ahead: one on human rights in Russia and another on identity-based discrimination. Both will focus attention on anti-Semitism and, we hope, will help bring governments to account for their actions to prevent and prosecute such acts. They will also include educational materials to help human rights activists oppose such incidents.

### **TRENDS AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS**

Amnesty International condemns anti-Semitism in all its forms. In recent months, we are deeply saddened by the alarming rise in the number of anti-Semitic incidents worldwide. The attacks include threatening hate mail, death threats, verbal and physical abuse against Jews, arson and other forms of destruction of synagogues, and desecration of cemeteries and other religious sites. Amnesty International strongly condemns the wave of attacks, and calls on governments to redouble their efforts to combat racism in all its forms and to bring to justice all suspected perpetrators of hate crimes.

It is impossible and I would not want even to attempt to address the reasoning behind such abusive attacks, but it may be worthwhile to consider factors that might be contributing to the escalation of incidents at this time.

### **HEIGHTENED TENSIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

There were numerous anti-Semitic incidents throughout the last year. There was a notable increase, however, beginning this year in March as tensions and violence increased in the Middle East. Since the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, hundreds of attacks have taken place worldwide. These attacks are wrong. They are anti-Semitic attacks against innocent men, women, and children. They are racist, discriminatory, and hateful attacks that cannot be justified under any circumstances.

We are especially concerned that legitimate criticism and debate about Middle East policy, in some instances, has degenerated into racist epithets and anti-Semitic attacks. I would like to offer as an illustration an incident that took place recently in the United States. The Washington Post on Sunday (May 19, 2002) carried an article by William Booth about heightened tension on college campuses where peaceful demonstrations have turned into hateful, racist, and intolerant attacks. At San Francisco State University, pro-Israel demonstrators were met by pro-Palestinian counter-demonstrators and the event degenerated; both sides reportedly exchanged insults and epithets. University President Robert Corrigan is quoted as saying that "a small but terribly destructive number of pro-Palestinian demonstrators ... abandoned themselves to intimidating behavior and statements too hate-filled to repeat." According to students, the counter-demonstrators "were screaming that Hitler should have finished the job" and "they called us ... terrorists."

Criticism of specific Israeli actions and policies must not become the basis for violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. This devastating incident is not isolated and clearly illustrates a case in which what might have been legitimate views in opposition to Israeli policy transformed into hateful statements against Jews. This is anti-Semitism.

Taken to the next step, such hatred is extremely dangerous. Take for example the attack in Antwerp, Belgium during Passover this spring, in which a mob of an estimated 700 people staged a demonstration on De Keyserlei, a broad avenue leading toward the old Jewish district of the city. The mob shouted, "Sharon is Hitler" and "Stop the Palestinian genocide." Police erected a barricade to protect the Jewish neighborhood. Several demonstrators slipped through and attacked a 17-year-old religious girl in a wheelchair, threw Molotov cocktails at property, and ransacked a kosher bakery. Police arrested 80 rioters before restoring order; reportedly, they are currently investigating these attacks.

It is a travesty that such incidents are occurring the around the world. Last month in Tunisia, for example, a driver rammed a truck bomb into an ancient synagogue on the island of Djerba. The bomber killed 17 people, most of them German and French tourists. The victims of this attack were targeted simply because they were in a synagogue, an identifiably "Jewish" place. Amnesty International has condemned these acts and called on officials to hold accountable those who carried out these crimes.

Such crimes have no place in the legitimate discussion over what is happening in the Middle East today. The perpetrators carried out anti-Semitic acts against individuals solely because they were perceived to be Jews or associated with Jews. We deplore such racist attacks.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ANTI-SEMITISM

The recent resurgence in anti-Semitism must also be considered in the context of Europe's history. Economic and political dislocations across Europe have led to blaming scapegoats for problems, including wrongfully blaming Jews and other minorities as scapegoats. For instance, the ancient "blood libel" accusation has been revived in Russia, in which Jews are alleged to kill Christian children for sacrificial purposes. There has also been a revival of the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a book known to have been concocted by the tsarist secret police under Tzar Nicolas II about one hundred years ago. (It describes alleged plans for a world Jewish conspiracy including control over the media.) And fueling the Holocaust was Hitler's ideology that viewed Jews as an inferior race. Today, the language used to express racism often takes the form of derogatory and insulting language describing Jews.

The State Department Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 2001 states that in Russia, for example, "anti-Semitic themes continue to figure prominently in some local publications around the country, unchallenged by local authorities. However, traditionally anti-Semitic publications with large distribution, such as the newspaper *Zavtra*, while still pursuing such anti-Semitic themes as the portrayal of Russian oligarchs as exclusively Jewish, appear to be more careful than in the past about using crude anti-Semitic language."

Anti-Semitism remains among the most common expressions of ethnic and religious intolerance and xenophobia today, particularly in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe, but in many other regions as well. European leaders have a special obligation to protect the continent's

remaining Jewish communities, six decades after the Holocaust. Recent attacks are taking place within an atmosphere of inflamed and ugly rhetoric.

In England, Oxford University Professor Tom Paulin told the Egyptian Al-Ahram Weekly on-line edition that he had “nothing but hatred” for “Brooklyn-born Jewish settlers,” who “should be shot.” It is deplorable that the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* recently depicted a baby Jesus looking up from the manger at an Israeli tank, saying “Don’t tell me they want to kill me again.” Such a cartoon echoes centuries of anti-Semitic libel. Such comparisons can only serve to inflame public opinion and incite acts of violence.

It is difficult to get precise figures on this topic because of a lack of monitoring and an apparently justifiable lack of public trust in the willingness and ability of law enforcement to combat hate-based crimes and activities.

### NEO-NAZI SKINHEADS

Recently, Europe has also seen a resurgence in violence by neo-Nazi skinheads. For too long skinheads have carried out violence and threats, and for too long their racist and anti-Semitic acts have been excused by local officials as “hooliganism” or “youthful pranks,” despite the fear and suffering they inflict on their victims. This has been the case especially in Russia.

Skinhead violence occurs year round and generally without a serious criminal investigation or condemnation by authorities. Sadly, April 20—to most of us not a noteworthy date—has become a rallying point for skinheads as they mark the anniversary of Hitler’s birth. This year, many local police took seriously the threat of skinhead violence on April 20 and are likely to have prevented some anti-Semitic and racist violence throughout Europe. Nonetheless, skinheads on April 20 succeeded in carrying out vandalism, inciting hatred, and screaming insults and threats. It is important to note, however, that skinheads were also responsible for violence leading up to and following the date when officials may not have been on such a heightened alert.

Recently, the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union (UCSJ) issued a report on skinhead violence in Russia. The report concludes that local government authorities, through inaction, have made it possible for skinheads to organize and carry out violence without consequence for so long now, that it has reached a point “where it is almost beyond control.”

### LAW ENFORCEMENT INACTION AND CONTINUED IMPUNITY

Police and other law enforcement officials routinely subject racial and ethnic minorities to harassment and intimidation and often respond with indifference to racial attacks. The irresponsible and disinterested attitude of many law enforcement officials is an underlying challenge to combating anti-Semitism and helps sustain the problem and create a climate of impunity for the perpetrators.

We heard earlier about the seven attacks of severe vandalism of the synagogue in Tyumen, Russia, which were carried out by skinheads last year. And the reports that the local skinhead chapter reportedly boasted about the attacks on its website, made reference to the “pleasant sound of breaking glass,” and threatened next time to use Molotov

cocktails. Sadly, police have not detained any suspects, claiming that the culprits must be caught in the act before they can be arrested. (UCSJ report)

We also heard reports by the Simon Wiesenthal Center regarding a Jewish center in Tomsk, Russia. Three days before the ceremony commemorating the opening, the building was defaced with swastikas and graffiti of “Yids get out of Russia!” and “Russia for Russians!” We are told that, although a policewoman arrived on the scene, she refused to record the incident as a crime, arguing that nobody was hurt and therefore the police would not search for the culprits, and that local press and officials ignored the incident.

In the Czech Republic, the State Department’s 2001 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom reports that “police were criticized on several occasions...for failing to intervene against neo-Nazis shouting anti-Semitic slogans at concerts and rallies.” The same State Department Report summarizes incidents in Romania where Jewish cemeteries were desecrated in six localities. Only in one instance was a perpetrator identified.

The Anti-Defamation League points to “a policy of non-enforcement of the law against evident manifestations of anti-Semitism ... including an obvious reluctance of prosecutors to enforce the existing legislation.”

Amnesty International has collected numerous accounts of racist acts in which the victims frequently complain that law enforcement officials are reluctant to register attacks as racist or fail to understand the serious implications of racially motivated violence.

Federal authorities allow city and regional authorities to ignore federal laws governing freedom of movement and religion, and frequently discriminate against minorities. Amnesty International believes that authorities must instead demonstrate a vigorous response to racism and ensure prosecution of offenders, to end the tide of attacks against minorities.

#### GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Several Presidents and Prime Ministers throughout Europe have made official statements condemning anti-Semitic and other racist acts. But words alone are not enough.

Russia’s President Putin has publicly condemned racially motivated violence and anti-Semitism and urged tolerance for a multi-ethnic Russia. The Russian government has also implemented an interagency program to “combat extremism and promote religious and ethnic tolerance,” but the implementation of this plan, according to the State Department, has been “sporadic.” In France, where there has been a particularly serious wave of attacks, police recorded 395 anti-Semitic incidents between March 29 and April 17, of which 63 percent involved anti-Semitic graffiti. Between January 1 and April 2, there were 34 “serious anti-Semitic actions” recorded, referring to attacks on Jewish persons or property, including synagogues and cemeteries. In March and April, several synagogues, in Lyon, Montpellier, Garges-les-Gonesses (Val d’Oise) and Strasbourg were vandalized, while the synagogue in Marseille was burned to the ground. In Paris, a crowd threw stones at a vehicle transporting pupils of a Jewish school, and the vehicle’s windows were broken. We are told that authorities are now investigating these attacks, but many still fear for their safety and have little faith that the investigations will result in prosecution of the offenders.



In England, a synagogue in Finsbury Park, London, was desecrated on April 27th. Vandals sprayed swastikas, smashed windows, scattered prayer books and religious articles, sprayed the ark with green paint, even defecated at the building's entrance. Authorities publicly condemned the act and police are investigating this case, but, to our knowledge, no suspects have been apprehended.

In Belgium, synagogues in Brussels and Antwerp were firebombed in April; the facade of a synagogue in Charleroi, southwest Belgium, was sprayed with bullets. A Jewish bookshop and delicatessen in Brussels were destroyed by fire. Officials opened criminal investigations into these incidents, as well as into a physical assault on the Chief Rabbi of Brussels in December 2001. Authorities have also issued public statements condemning the attacks, opposing all forms of anti-Semitism, and specifying that the situation in the Middle East should not serve, under any circumstance, as a pretext for acts of violence and intolerance against a community.

Last month, the European Union pledged to continue to make "efforts against all forms of intolerance which take as their pretext the conflicts and act of violence in the Middle East and are aimed at persons of the Muslim, Jewish or any other faith. At a time of acute international tension, especially in the Middle East, it is vital to preserve the spirit of harmony, entente and intercultural respect within our societies." More recently, Javier Solana, Foreign Policy Chief for the European Union, conveyed his belief that Europe is a tolerant place and dismissed concerns of the White House and others about the wave of incidents in Europe. Solana said, "Europe will continue to be a place where almost all citizens continue defending values of tolerance and comprehension which are absolutely incompatible with anti-Semitism." (Reuters)

More must be done to ensure governments redouble their efforts to combat anti-Semitism and racism, and to bring to justice suspected perpetrators of hate crimes.

#### INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Several international instruments address government responsibility for protecting against human rights violations associated with anti-Semitism and other forms of racism.

Among the relevant agreements of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to hold parties accountable on this issue, especially relevant is the OSCE Copenhagen Concluding Document—1990. It states: (40) "The participating States clearly and unequivocally condemn totalitarianism, racial and ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and discrimination against anyone as well as persecution on religious and ideological grounds . . ." and "declare their firm intention to intensify the efforts to combat these phenomena in all their forms.

More recently, the Ministerial Council Decision No. 5-(MC(9).DEC/5) 2001 called on OSCE institutions to pay increased attention to manifestations of aggressive nationalism, racism, chauvinism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and violent extremism, to countering intolerance and discrimination on the ground of racial or ethnic origin, religious, political or other opinion and to fostering respect for rule of law, democratic values, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, thought, conscience, religion or belief." It also tasked the Permanent Council "to consider developing further measures in this regard."

In addition United Nations instruments that hold governments accountable on this issues include: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Declaration on the Elimination of All for of Racial Discrimination, and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

The American Jewish Committee has conducted important historical research into the history of anti-Semitism and the international response. The AJC documents how the United Nations declarations on racial discrimination and on religious intolerance were drafted initially in response to outbreaks of anti-Semitic incidents in 1959-60. The incidents compelled the sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on Human Rights to condemn anti-Semitism specifically in a resolution adopted March 16, 1960: "noting with deep concern the manifestations of anti-Semitism and other forms of racial prejudice and religious intolerance of a similar nature ... which might be once again the forerunner of other heinous acts endangering the future . . ." the resolution "condemns thee manifestations as violations of the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in particular as a violation of the human rights of the groups against which they are directed, and as a threat to the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all peoples."

The United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination obliges States not only to end discrimination by government officials, but also to protect people against racial discrimination and violence at the hands of private individuals, groups or institutions.

Additional mechanisms adopted by European countries to combat racial discrimination include the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the European Social Charter, and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) whose mandate is to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance at a pan-European level.

Clearly, governments have a mandate and obligation to implement measures that prevent anti-Semitism and other forms of acts of racist and religious intolerance, and to ensure prosecution against those who commit such hatefully motivated crimes.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **NATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION**

- Amnesty International urges European authorities and community leaders to vigorously and publicly condemn anti-Semitism and racism in all its forms.
- Amnesty International calls on European authorities to adopt a national strategy and plan of action to combat anti-Semitism and all forms of racism, as recommended by the OSCE and other international bodies.

- The national strategy and plan should include specific measures to prevent manifestations of anti-Semitism and racism in the administration of justice.
- The design of such a strategy and plan should include meaningful consultations with representatives of affected groups, relevant NGOs and experts working on the issue of racism and the administration of justice, as well as relevant officials.
- The strategy and plan contain measurable goals and monitoring mechanisms.

#### **INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY SECURITY**

- Local authorities should provide adequate protection to Jewish and other minority groups, including Jewish public buildings.
- Governments should provide a set of guarantees for religious and ethnic minorities, investigation and prosecution of hate-based crimes, and support in protecting and returning religious property.
- Governments should effectively monitor incidents of anti-Semitism and other forms of persecution and discrimination, and should implement and monitor effectiveness of legal frameworks to protect an individual's right to freedom of religion, association, and belief.

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PREVENTING IMPUNITY**

- Human rights and race-awareness training should be a fundamental part of the training of all law enforcement, judicial and immigration officials from the point of recruitment onwards.
- Central, autonomous and local governments must ensure that police officers are trained in the effective prevention and response to anti-Semitic and racial violence and discrimination carried out by private individuals, groups, or institutions.
- National governments should urge thorough investigations into hate-based crimes and should support efforts by local officials to bring to justice those responsible for such abuses. • All allegations of torture, ill-treatment, and other race-related abuses by individuals or by agents of the state should be subject to prompt, thorough, effective and impartial investigations. Complainants should receive protection against any form of intimidation.
- Any officials who have consistently failed to launch serious criminal investigations into such human rights abuses should be held accountable and removed from their positions of responsibility pending the outcome of disciplinary and/or judicial proceedings against them. Investigation procedures should be prompt and transparent. Complainants should have full access to the information they need to prosecute a case and be kept informed of the progress of the investigations.
- Governmental monitoring agencies, such as Ombudsman's offices, should maintain and publish regular and comprehensive data on anti-Semitic and race-related complaints. This data should include data on complaints against public officials. It should also provide information on how the complaints were handled, so as to identify patterns of violations and recommend appropriate remedial action. Police and Civil Guard departments should provide information on internal disciplinary processes and publish regular statistical data on the type and outcome of complaints and disciplinary

action. Clear guidelines must require officers to report abuses, and officers with chain-of-command control should be held responsible for strictly enforcing guidelines and penalties for failing to report, or covering up abuses.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS**

- European countries should implement in full the International Convention Against All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and other international human rights treaties prohibiting discrimination based on race, religion, or other forms of identity.
- European countries should ensure full implementation of the recommendations made by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations, regarding the prompt and thorough investigation of allegations of anti-Semitic and other racist attacks; effective compliance with safeguards against such ill-treatment; measures to address the particular risks of Jewish communities and other minorities; and the need to tackle underlying economic and social causes of racism and racist ill-treatment.

#### **UNITED STATES INITIATIVES RELATED TO THE BUSH-PUTIN SUMMIT**

- As the US Congress considers the lifting of Jackson Vanik, it should also consider leveraging the potential change in policy to seek improved policies on the part of the Russian government regarding human rights, including addressing anti-Semitism and other issues of religious, racial and ethnic discrimination.
- Although President Putin has made strong public statements against such human rights abuses, the interagency program Putin established to “combat extremism and promote religious and ethnic tolerance” is largely ineffective, and local authorities generally fail to launch serious criminal investigations into such racist attacks. President Bush must urge the Russian government to take measures to effectively prosecute offenders.

**PREPARED SUBMISSION OF  
RABBI ANDREW BAKER,  
DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL JEWISH AFFAIRS,  
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

During the last twenty months there has been an alarming number of anti-Semitic incidents in Western Europe, particularly in France. By some accounts these incidents—ranging from arson attacks on synagogues to personal altercations—are occurring at the rate of one a day. No one disputes the number, but there are certainly many different views on what they mean.

One State Department official, taking note of the fact that such incidents also “spiked” in 1982 at the time of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, suggested that what we are seeing now is similar, almost as if anti-Semitic acts in Europe accompany conflict in the Middle East, much like inflation and higher interest rates go hand in hand.

A French Jewish Leader attending our recent annual meeting here in Washington said that three synagogues in his country had been set aflame in a single week. To him it could only be compared to Kristallnacht, that night in November 1938 when the Nazis systematically burned synagogues throughout Germany and Austria.

I do not believe we are replaying the 1930s, but we would be terribly remiss if we discount the seriousness of what is happening or simply ascribe it to “fallout” from the Middle East crisis. There is without question a level of anxiety and concern and even fear among many Jews in Europe today that we have not seen in decades.

Recently, a friend of twenty years called me from Strasbourg. He himself survived the Holocaust as a boy hiding out in the Alsace Region. He has worked all of his adult life in the postwar institutions designed to promote cooperation and integration in Europe. His call was a personal one. Could I offer some contacts in French speaking Canada? His adult children wanted to know if their degrees and credentials earned in France might be accepted there. They wondered if Quebec might be an option for them in the future. I asked my friend how this made him feel. “Of course, I do not believe that there will be another Holocaust,” he said. “But, we remember what our parents did not do.”

**THE PROBLEM**

There are, I believe, three distinct and separate sources for this anxiety.

*GROWING AND RADICALIZED ARAB AND MUSLIM  
COMMUNITIES*

No doubt most of the anti-Semitic incidents that have occurred in France and probably elsewhere in Europe can be traced to the large and increasingly radicalized Arab and Muslim population. There are today 6 million Arabs and Muslims in France and perhaps 15 million throughout the nations of the European Union. They watch *Al Jazeera* and read the Arabic press, and they have focused on the Middle East and identify with their brethren in Palestine. For many of them Jews have become the locally available focus for their anger and hostility. Many of the neighborhoods in which these Arabs and Muslims live are close by traditionally observant Jewish communities, and the targets are nu-

merous. It is no exaggeration to say that Jewish parents now question whether it is safe to send their kids off to school wearing kippot on their heads or Jewish stars around their necks.

#### *THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF THE FAR RIGHT*

We are all legitimately troubled by the continued success of the Far Right. Le Pen and his National Front Party had been dismissed as a spent force in France, but in the recent French Presidential election he garnered nearly 20 percent of the vote. Other right-wing populists in neighboring countries are also scoring similar victories. Joerg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria is another example, where his victory led to an invitation to join the government. Anti-Semitism has often been a feature—though not necessarily the main feature—of these nationalist parties' platforms. In recent years, their electoral victories are probably due far more to their anti-immigrant and anti-Arab agenda. But, Jews take no comfort in their success. Many European minorities—and European Jews in particular—find considerable safety and comfort in the idea of a strong European umbrella, which extends over many ethnic and national groups, who in turn can feel fully at home. While these right-wing parties have been unable to build any real transnational links in Europe, they do share common cause in their opposition to European integration and enlargement. And they could well succeed in slowing down or even reversing this process. If nationalist passions are inflamed, Jewish security—and certainly their sense of security—is threatened.

#### *ANTI-SEMITISM ON THE LEFT*

There is a growing anti-Israel animus on the Left in Europe that encompasses certain political elites, media, NGOs and human rights "activists." It begins with the premise that in the current Middle East crisis the Palestinians are the victims and Israel their persecutor. It is, sad to say, the accepted dogma in much of Western Europe. However legitimate criticism of Israel may be, it has in many places crossed the line and become another form of anti-Semitism. The image of an Israeli, who is frequently portrayed as an aggressive and racist violator of human rights, is quickly conflated with the Jew. Political cartoons depict Israeli leaders in the same way as Nazi cartoonists drew their Jewish villains. Public demonstrations in support of the Palestinians often feature placards equating Israel or Zionism with Nazism. Even shouts of "Death to the Jews" have become commonplace. In this environment even the secular and assimilated Jew is singled out and threatened.

#### **UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE FUTURE**

No one can predict where these three problem areas will lead. Many European governments have avoided a serious confrontation with their growing Arab and Muslim populations, who resist assimilating in the ways of previous immigrant groups. In the meantime they have become a source of increased lawlessness and a likely breeding ground for radical and fundamentalist ideologies, which portray Jews as their special enemy.

We have frequently written the obituaries of right-wing European populists only to see them resurrected. Hopefully, they will come to wither in a Europe that is integrated and whole. But, the volatility in

European elections make it far from certain that mainstream European leaders will have the support and confidence to resist making coalitions with these people and to steer the necessary, centrist course.

There is little doubt that some—but only some—of these anti-Semitic incidents will diminish if the Middle East conflict is resolved. Certainly for those people suffering in Israel and the Territories we hope a resolution will come soon. But, realistically we are aware of the enormous difficulties involved to bring about a cease-fire and a temporary halt to the bloodshed.

#### WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING

Sadly, many European leaders still cannot accept the severity of the problem. They need to hear from our Government and from Members of Congress emphatically but in measured and sober tones that anti-Semitism is again a serious problem in Europe and they must address it.

The security of Jewish institutions and individuals must be increased. Jewish citizens of Europe have the right to feel secure at home, on the street and in their places of worship. Criminal acts, which authorities may want to quickly classify as simple acts of vandalism or hooliganism, need to be identified as hate crimes and the perpetrators pursued and punished. Those who incite these crimes must be investigated and brought to justice.

Debate on the Middle East conflict and even harsh public criticism of Israeli government policy have their place in European democracies. But, there can be little doubt that biased, one-sided, and unrelentingly hostile attacks on Israel have contributed to a climate—much as we witnessed at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban last summer—in which the Jewish State is demonized and presented as a pariah among the nations. A sense of balance and historical accuracy must be restored.

#### CONCLUSION

Earlier this month at the American Jewish Committee's 96th Annual Meeting, we also played host to Jewish leaders from over forty countries around the world, including many from the European continent. During the course of those few days they joined with our own members in programs and workshops. They heard from senior members of the Administration and from Congressmen and Senators, including some of the members of this Commission. They understood that American values which cherish a diverse and pluralist society cannot tolerate anti-Semitism or any form of discrimination. They heard the natural expressions of American support for Israel as our democratic ally in the Middle East. They were heartened by what they saw, and they returned home invigorated by the experience. They know that the problems they face must be solved in European capitals. But, they also know that their strongest allies in the fight against anti-Semitism today are to be found in this capital.

**MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD  
BY RABBI ANDREW BAKER, DIRECTOR OF  
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH AFFAIRS,  
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**ANTI-SEMITISM, HOLOCAUST MEMORY,  
PROPERTY RESTITUTION AND RELATED ISSUES  
CONFRONTING THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF CENTRAL AND  
EASTERN EUROPE**

A STATUS REPORT  
PREPARED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
ON THE OCCASION OF

**BUCHAREST SUMMIT 2002: THE SPRING OF NEW ALLIES**

**BUCHAREST, ROMANIA  
MARCH 25, 2002**

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## INTRODUCTION

**RABBI ANDREW BAKER  
DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL JEWISH AFFAIRS  
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

At the beginning of the last century the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe were a unique and highly visible presence. They numbered in the millions and contributed to the social and political life of their respective nations, even as they were linked across borders by a common Jewish culture and language. The fascist and ultra-nationalist forces that took hold in Europe in the 1930s identified them as their first targets. When the exterminating fury of the Nazis and their local collaborators had been spent, the vast majority of these Jews were dead. Most of those who survived left for America or Palestine to begin new lives.

A decade ago, the nations of this region sought to establish an independent political life free from the grip of communism. The principles of democracy and civic society were quickly recognized as the goal of this transformation. In only a few short years most realized that it was not a question of whether this would be achieved, but only how long and with what degree of difficulty. Even the most established Western institutions and the most prominent democratic umbrellas were not beyond their reach, as the current process of NATO enlargement makes clear.

For the Jews in these countries, the future was less certain. The Holocaust and decades of communist oppression—often with its own special form of anti-Semitism—led many to conclude that immigration to the West or *aliyah* to Israel were the only real choices for those few Jews remaining. But they underestimated the tenacity and determination of these remnants. In the past decade Jewish communal life has again taken root. Synagogues have been rebuilt and Jewish schools have opened. Special links have been established with the State of Israel. Rabbis and teachers as well as material assistance have come from abroad, while at the same time a new generation of local leaders has also emerged.

The early persecution of European Jewry in the years leading up to the Holocaust and the Second World War was a harbinger of the terrible things still to come. Today we can read, in the revival of Jewish life, a similar role. Their security and survival will surely be a sign that democratic values, the protection of minorities and a respect for diversity have taken root.

But if these Jewish communities are to be self-sufficient they must secure the restitution of their former properties. It is happening, but in every case only slowly and with difficulty. Many of these countries never had the opportunity to confront their own roles during the Holocaust, and some even took the occasion to rehabilitate old fascist leaders when the Soviet yoke was removed. However, outside pressures have led to the creation of historical commissions and the examination and rewriting of textbooks, which are beginning to have an impact. These new democracies are also learning that freedom of expression and open debate can give vent to racists and xenophobes, too. Many have seen the resurgence of populist and anti-Semitic groups and the publication of anti-Semitic newspapers and books such as *Mein Kampf* and *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Civic and political leaders need to confront these developments in a forceful and public way.

On the occasion of the meeting of Prime Ministers from NATO aspirant countries at the *Bucharest Summit 2002: The Spring of New Allies*, the American Jewish Committee has invited the leaders of Jewish communities from these same countries, and from the new NATO member-states, to join in a roundtable discussion in Bucharest. Each has been asked to share their observations on the progress made in the area of property restitution, on the degree to which Holocaust memory has been addressed, and on the level of anti-Semitism in present-day society. Additionally, each was asked to comment on how the renewed Israeli-Palestinian conflict is being reported in their respective countries. What follows are the written submissions of these leaders. Taken together they offer a “status report” on developments, identifying the progress that has been made, as well as the problems that remain to be tackled.

March 2002  
Nisan 5762

## BULGARIA

EMIL KALO,  
PRESIDENT,  
SHALOM/ORGANIZATION OF JEWS IN BULGARIA

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

It is well known that Bulgaria was the first state in which, after the changes in 1989, all legal questions connected with restitution of Jewish property were settled. I would note that there were two kinds of restitution, because Jewish property was taken during World War II, restituted immediately afterward, and seized again by the communist regime. Laws enacted after 1990 led to the return of some Jewish communal assets. As far as the legal part of the question is concerned, practically everything that ever belonged to the Jewish community has been restituted.

At the same time, several governments have refused to implement the decisions of a Bulgarian court on two of the most important assets; thus, 49 percent ownership of the Rila Hotel and full rights to the property at 9 Saborna Street in Sofia still belong to the state. Many factors, some of them unclear, have contributed to this situation. I am convinced that if upholding the court rulings on Jewish property is established as a requirement for Bulgaria's membership in NATO and the European Union, this matter will finally be addressed.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Bulgarian society was unique for its behavior during the Holocaust. The Organization of Jews in Bulgaria is pressing for the inclusion of Bulgarian rescue efforts in all history textbooks used by the nation's schools. We also support a national day of Holocaust remembrance and rescue commemoration, which would coincide with the anniversary of the revocation of the deportation order on March 9, 1943.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

Against the backdrop of Bulgaria's tradition of tolerance, the increase of anti-Semitic acts has been notable: Synagogues have been marred with graffiti, while Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated. In just a six-month period, several anti-Semitic books have been published, such as *The Holocaust: The Fraud of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*; Hitler's *Mein Kampf*; a collection of Nazi propaganda speeches by Joseph Goebbels; and *The Boomerang of Evil*, an anti-Semitic work by a Bulgarian author. Sadly, Bulgarian society has not reacted to this trend, as most Bulgarians are content to rely on reputed evidence of historical events, even if the proof is questionable. To address this problem, Shalom/OJB has organized a public relations commission, to which it is trying to attract outstanding Bulgarian writers, scientists, and jurists.

### MIDDLE EAST

It cannot be said that Bulgarian society has clear and definite positions about the Arab-Israeli conflict. More and more, the media follows Western European inclinations, which in most cases are pro-Palestinian. The government has endorsed a balanced policy, but its views have been pro-Palestinian, as well; this is despite the fact that Foreign Min-

ister Solomon Passy is Jewish. I would not say that the Middle East conflict has resulted in anti-Jewish feelings or actions in Bulgaria, although the more than 10,000 Arabs who live in the country have conducted some anti-Israel campaigns; those efforts have not elicited a wide public response, however.

### **BULGARIA**

**VICTOR MELAMED,  
CHAIRMAN,  
FEDERATION OF ZIONISTS IN BULGARIA**

#### **HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

The Republic of Bulgaria was the first Eastern European country to pass a law resolving the problem of Jewish property restitution. In 1993 the government of Prime Minister Philip Dimitrov executed the law and started the restitution process; restitution of private Jewish property is now 90 percent complete. As for Jewish communal property, the situation is not as favorable. Although a large part of that property has been restituted, some of the main buildings owned by the Jewish Consistory in Sofia and other cities still have not been returned, because of private, corporate involvement. Such is the case with the Rila Hotel in the center of Sofia, as well as with a different five-story building also in downtown Sofia; some buildings in Varna, Pazarjik, and other cities also await restitution.

The government of former Prime Minister Ivan Kostov at one point declared its readiness to fully implement the law, but in fact did nothing to go beyond words, even showing an unwillingness to be disturbed about the issue; the government's actions raised suspicions about its connections to the above-mentioned corporate interests. There are now indications that the government of Prime Minister Simeon Saxe-Cobourg Gotha is ready to put an end to the inertia that has stalled Jewish property restitution. This government's lack of administrative experience made its first six months in office very difficult, but there are no longer any excuses for not implementing the decisions of the high court, which has recognized the Jewish organization "Shalom" as the successor to the Consistory.

#### **HOLOCAUST MEMORY**

Bulgaria is proud to have saved its Jewish population during World War II. It should be noted that during the long period of totalitarian rule, the Communist Party initially ignored the rescue of Bulgarian Jewry, before later claiming credit for itself for the heroic deed. Today everyone in the country realizes that the rescue of the country's Jews was made possible by the united efforts of different parts of Bulgarian society, rather than just a single person, party, or group. Fortunately, several good books on the rescue have been published in the past few years, such as *Beyond Hitler's Grasp*, *The Biography of Dimitar Peshev*, and others. Chapters on this period of Bulgarian history and on the Holocaust itself have appeared in history textbooks, where it is written that 10,000 Jews from Thrace and Macedonia—then under the jurisdiction of Bulgaria—perished in the death camps.

Still, Bulgarian society does not recognize the demise of those two communities as the sole responsibility of the wartime government in Sofia. The widespread opinion is that responsibility should be shared with the local populations and leaders who, unlike the rest of Bulgaria, did not oppose the Nazi deportation of Jews. Moreover, there is a reluctance to debate that issue, because doing so would necessarily broach the issue of the origins of the Thracian and Macedonian populations, which is a sensitive matter in both Bulgarian-Greek and Bulgarian-Macedonian relations. At a time when those relationships are stable and positive, Bulgarian society is wary of reviving old ethnic conflicts, particularly in light of current economic difficulties, which are more pressing.

The Bulgarian Jewish community has made a monument and memorial plates devoted to our brothers and sisters from Thrace and Macedonia who lost their lives during World War II, and to the Bulgarians who died trying to save Jews. In general, Bulgaria has not witnessed efforts to minimize the Holocaust, or to rehabilitate Bulgarian fascist leaders.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

The development of democracy in Bulgaria has unfortunately been paralleled by the emergence of something that Bulgarian Jews had thought of as stagnant, or even nonexistent, in its more extreme forms: anti-Semitism. It cannot be classified as an organized phenomenon yet, but at least as a publishing activity, anti-Semitism has become more than just a pattern of infrequent, isolated episodes. Several publishing houses seem to be competing with each other for supremacy as specialists in the publication of Hitler's speeches and books, as well as similar hate texts, including *The World Conspiracy*. Such works can be bought everywhere in Sofia and the other large cities. What is most worrisome is that the seriousness of this phenomenon is widely dismissed, as authorities are doing little to counter the disturbing trend. There is also one daily publication, *Monitor*, that prints "historical" articles featuring unflattering depictions of Jews.

All of these occurrences are regarded as inevitable by-products of the awkward transition from censorship to free speech. The fact that the foreign minister is Jewish is often cited as evidence that anti-Semitism is not rising. The Jewish community is worried nonetheless, though, having concluded that graffiti like "Gypsies and Jews should be made into soap" is just a half-step from physical acts of anti-Semitism; a major gathering at the Bet Am in Sofia on February 12 explored this problem. Meanwhile, a *New York Times* article about the proliferation of anti-Semitic literature and posters of Hitler in Bulgaria generated little interest among the media or on the street. Bulgarians showed little concern for the potentially negative impact of the *Times* article on Bulgaria's image; some radio interviews on the subject minimized the significance of both the *Times* piece and the anti-Semitic publications themselves.

#### MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East conflict is publicized in Bulgaria through international news agencies. While their reports reflect an attempt to be balanced, they nonetheless sometimes fail in this regard, occasionally presenting the Palestinians purely as victims. Bearing in mind the strong tradition of Bulgarian-Arab relations dating back to the communist

period, though, Middle East reporting is not as pro-Arab as one might expect. In general, Bulgarians are not following the conflict that closely, focusing instead on the Balkan clashes—especially the struggle in Macedonia, which could spill over the border that country shares with Bulgaria. As far as the Middle East is concerned, the Bulgarians remain passive, believing that Israel will always manage to keep the situation under some control, with support from the United States. (Differences between the U.S. and European positions on Middle East policy are not widely acknowledged.) There is even some admiration in Bulgaria for the Israeli army and security services, and for the Israeli political culture.

Most Bulgarians feel that the Middle East conflict is perhaps ultimately unsolvable, and will continue to experience ups and downs, but will not result in a major war soon. Even the growing number of Bulgarian workers in Israel has not inspired greater interest in the Middle East. The conflict is certainly not producing anti-Jewish sentiment, nor are Bulgarian politicians trying to manipulate events in the Middle East for their own purposes.

## CROATIA

IVO GOLDSTEIN,  
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY,  
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

A Croatian law providing for restitution of communist-era assets was passed in 1993. Authorities have always contended that this includes restitution of Jewish property that had been taken in 1941-45 and briefly returned following the war, before being nationalized by the communists. The state's claim is dubious, though, because property of deceased owners was never returned. We hope that a new law will be passed this year, one that will mandate the restitution of property seized as early as 1941. In the meantime, Jewish property restitution is proceeding slowly, although non-Jewish property is not being returned any more quickly.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

There are many reasons for Croatian Holocaust revisionism, but three of them are particularly significant.

First, during 45 years of communism, questions surrounding the NDH (Independent State of Croatia) and the rule of the Ustasha movement were very rarely addressed in an analytically sane manner. The approach was usually generalized, with *a priori* evaluations that were often exaggerated and expressed in boring propagandistic phraseology. At the same time, there was the strictest prohibition against any mention of Partisan or communist war and postwar crimes. When political and social democratization at the end of the Eighties made such references possible, there was an eruption in the extreme opposite direction. The media revelled in sensationally exposing Partisan and communist crimes, which were used as material for xenophobic and political propaganda and incitement, while Ustasha crimes were simultaneously shrouded in an artificial fog of qualifiers, justifications, and silence.

Second, Croatian revisionist historiographers are usually not motivated by scholarly investigation into the more recent past, but by political goals. At the very least it may be said that they approach their work with a political bias consistent with the ruling policies of 1990-99. As a rule, their political outlook is right-wing or extremely right-wing, and one of its basic characteristics is the failure to properly address crimes committed by the Ustasha authorities during the NDH period. There is also the influence of extremist Croatian political emigres who never broke off from the Ustasha movement and its ideology. The party that came to power in 1990—the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), under the leadership of Franjo Tudjman—proclaimed the “reconciliation of Ustashes and Partisans,” because one of the core objectives of the HDZ political program was to overcome any division among Croats. It was therefore necessary to dissociate the Ustasha movement from the odious image of a faithful Nazi fascist ally and perpetrator of the worst kind of genocide and crimes against the civilian population during the Second World War; instead, the intent was to provide the Ustashes with at least some kind of legitimate basis for participating in Croatia’s civic development in the predominantly democratic European political environment. This was shown to be impossible without radically revising history and denying or falsifying facts.

Third, Croatian revisionist historiography is partly a reaction to the escalation of Serbian nationalism and revisionist historiography in the Eighties.

Tudjman’s responsibility for the promotion of Croatian revisionist historiography is coupled with his even greater responsibility as the main patron of the corresponding revisionism in politics and public life. He opened the door to this phenomenon in his statement at the first HDZ convention in February, 1990, saying that the “NDH had not only been a fascist creation, but also an expression of the centuries-old desire of the Croatian people for an independent state.” In the first place, this statement is extremely ethnocentric. If it were true that the NDH really had been the “expression of the centuries-old desire of the Croatian people,” then it would have brought all the other peoples in Croatia—starting with Serbs, Roma, and Jews, against whom that state committed genocidal crimes—into confrontation with Croatian historical memory and the Croatian people in general. The statement opened up an impassioned public dispute about the true character of the NDH. Realizing the dangers inherent in the ambiguity of his statement, Tudjman in later denials distanced himself from any links with Nazism and the Ustasha ideology, but he never publicly dissociated himself from widespread attempts to negatively shape the identity of the Croatian state, whose spirit his statement embodied. His 1994 decision to revive the currency name “kuna,” used by the NDH in 1941-45, was another example.

Military and bureaucratic terminology, as well as the new names for state institutions (e.g., the Croatian parliament reacquired its NDH name, Croatian National Sabor) were additional signs of continuity with the NDH. Monuments and memorials (2,964 in all) for fighters killed in the national liberation struggle of World War II, and for victims of Ustasha and Nazi terror, were destroyed, desecrated, or removed. Streets, army barracks, and local civic institutions were named after Ustasha officials and army commanders. Notorious Ustasha songs became part of the folklore of celebrations and other events. The names

“Ustasha Home Guard” (*ustaško-domobranska vojska*) or “NDH army” were increasingly replaced by the term “Croatian army”; the earlier term for the other side, “National Liberation Army,” was often replaced by either “Yugo-Communist units” or “Yugoslav army,” but most frequently by name “Partisans”.

Under the pressure of this psychosis, revisionist terminology even found its way into serious, sound dictionary texts that otherwise had no connection with revisionism, as well as into many other books. After the elections on January 3, 2000, when Tudjman’s HDZ party was defeated and the opposition coalition came to power, the situation changed significantly. Among other things, Croatian President Stjepan Mesić apologized in the Israeli Knesset for crimes committed by Ustashas in the name of the Croatian people. Even so, many more efforts will have to be expended before a consciousness of real events and relationships in the Second World War prevails among the Croatian public.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism does not pose a major threat to the Jewish community in Croatia, as it has never had a big impact on public life. Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where anti-Semitism was never as strong as it was in the Russian Empire—no pogroms occurred, nor were Jews physically endangered. Since the end of 19th Century there have always been significant social forces in opposition to anti-Semitic outbursts. Except for Tudjman, no Croatian officials in recent years have made statements that could be regarded as anti-Semitic. In fact, one might even say that everyone in the government is philo-Semitic.

During the Balkan conflict Croatian Jews felt compelled to show solidarity with their compatriots opposing the aggression of the Yugoslav People’s Army. The Jewish community experienced indirect pressure to support the government’s every decision, which was unacceptable.

Nevertheless, the main source of distress for Croatian Jewry in recent years has been a tendency toward the revisionist propaganda argument that the Ustasha puppet regime was only defending Croatian national interests, and did not intend to commit any crimes whatsoever. Regarding the Jews, there have been a great variety of statements, nearly all of them disgusting: While some revisionists apologize to the Jews, saying that the killing of Jews was a terrible mistake, some of them say that the Jews were killed by Nazis, and not by the Ustasha regime; others say that only Jews who committed crimes against the state were killed. In the Croatian case it is very difficult to understand this attitude, simply because it does not reflect the historical truth, namely, that a significant percentage of the Croatian population joined Partisans and fought against Nazis and their Ustasha allies.

#### MIDDLE EAST

There is no strategic Croatian interest in the Middle East conflict. Because of a lack of interest and money, there are almost no Croatian journalists continually reporting from Israel and the surrounding areas. The general attitude of the public is, frankly speaking, one of ignorance. Israeli sources who know the Balkans well say that they have little problem with coverage of the Middle East in Croatia, compared with in some neighboring countries. Nevertheless, the coverage is not



quite satisfactory, as the media generally do not draw a substantial distinction between terrorism and retaliatory acts in which incidental civilian deaths might occur.

### CZECH REPUBLIC

**TOMAS KRAUS,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
FEDERATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN THE  
CZECH REPUBLIC**

### **HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

The process of restitution of Jewish communal property began in 1992, before Czechoslovak separation, when the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic assembled an exhaustive record of properties that had been taken during the World War II era. After many delays, a law was adopted in June, 1994 that allowed for the return of some, but not all, real estate lost by individuals from 1938 to 1945. In particular, non-Czech citizens and former owners of agricultural property did not benefit from this legislation. Another major development resulting from that law was the transfer of the Prague Jewish museum from state authorities to an independent agency founded by the Jewish community, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture. The measure did not, however, provide for restitution of property that had already been privatized or passed on to municipalities.

In January, 1999 the Czech government decided to establish a joint commission to deal with all property claims. Headed by Deputy Prime Minister Pavel Rychetsky, it consisted of Czech officials and Jewish community representatives; the Federation invited the American Jewish Committee and the World Jewish Restitution Organization to participate, as well. The commission proposed to the Czech government several steps—legislation, government actions and decrees, etc.—leading to redress of the injustice caused to the Czech Jewish population during the Second World War and the communist period. A law was subsequently passed enabling the government to transfer real estate ownership from the state to the Jewish community; it also allowed individual claims for agricultural property and removed the Czech citizenship requirement for claimants of looted art being held by state institutions. The equivalent of \$7.5 million in U.S. currency was transferred to a Holocaust victims' fund that would, in part, compensate non-citizens, heirs, and others who for various reasons had been unable to regain real estate lost during the World War II era.

While most Jewish communal property controlled by the state has been returned, there are still dozens of properties in state hands that have not been restituted. A subcommittee of the property commission has conducted an extensive investigation into the matter and will issue a full report in 2002. The historical research conducted by this body has served as a basis for a government decree calling for the return of some communal properties and facilitating compensation awards in other cases.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

The pre-communist Czechoslovak government decided in 1947 to establish a memorial museum on the site of the former concentration camp of Theresienstadt (Terezin). By its opening in 1949, though, the Terezin Memorial had become integrated into the propaganda efforts of the new communist regime; the history of the Terezin Ghetto was portrayed as a tale of communist resistance and class struggle. Anti-Semitic trials in the 1950s and the break in Czechoslovak-Israeli relations in the 1960s further signaled the government's impatience with the attention paid to Jewish suffering; in fact, only communist victims of persecution received any official acknowledgement of their oppression. As a result, the work of the museum suffered; the Soviet invasion after the Prague Spring of 1968 was another major setback, as all of the museum's subsequent activities became increasingly compromised by the veiled anti-Semitism of the state's official ideology.

Proprietors of the Terezin Memorial, with the cooperation of Czech Holocaust survivors, set about building a Terezin Ghetto museum shortly after communism's fall. Housed in an old municipal school building, the most important priority of the new museum was education. As the Terezin Memorial's activities require major research efforts, whose results include not only studies and monographs but above all permanent and temporary exhibitions, the institution has become a valuable information source. It is also a center for scholarly and youth exchanges, and an organizer of international scientific conferences dealing with various issues related to the Jewish ghetto and the concentration camp, among other topics. The current level of knowledge about what happened to the Jews, Roma, and Sinti during World War II remains low, but obstacles to education have been removed, and it is now possible to rectify the situation. The Terezin Memorial, as well as civic unions and other institutions, can play a role in this endeavor. The good will and active interest of Czech teachers can further solidify the basis for progress in the field of Holocaust education, as well as in Czech society generally.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

Czech anti-Semitism peaked around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when Czech society experienced a scapegoating episode similar to the Dreyfus trial in France; the Czech version was known as the Hilsner affair. Czechoslovakia's first president, Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, played a positive role in quelling anti-Semitism, and Jewish integration into public life grew. Attempts by a fringe Czech Nazi group to revive hatred of Jews failed in the 1930s; anti-Semitism was further repudiated after the Nazi occupation ended.

As the so-called "Jewish Question" is strongly linked in Czech minds with the threat that Czechs themselves felt from the Nazis, the Czech people have always felt compassion for Jewish suffering. During the Velvet Revolution, the image of the Jew as a survivor, an intellectual, and a freedom-fighter carried particular appeal, and a sort of philo-Semitism emerged. More recently, however, the younger generation has begun to show signs of ethnic hatred, directed mostly at Roma, but also occasionally at Jews. The xenophobic and racist campaigns of skinheads and other right-wing groups that have contributed to this phenomenon must be countered with tolerance education and advocacy of justice for all minorities.

### MIDDLE EAST

The attitude of the average Czech citizen toward the Middle East conflict was expressed by Prime Minister Milos Zeman on his trip to Israel in February, 2002. The prime minister spoke very bluntly and undiplomatically; afterward, he had to clarify an impolitic comparison between the eviction of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia after the war and a possible expulsion of Palestinians. Nevertheless, his condemnation of terrorism and support for Israel were clearly stated.

Middle East coverage in the Czech media is very pro-Israel, or at least evenhanded; the usual exceptions to this rule are articles that are produced by international news agencies and carried in the Czech press.

Relations between the unified Czechoslovakia and Israel ran long and deep, beginning with Jan Masaryk's lobbying for the creation of a Jewish state, followed by the delivery of arms to Israeli forces during the War of Independence. Though ties between the two countries were severed by the communists in 1967, Czechs have always empathized with Israel's geo-political predicament as a small nation surrounded by larger hostile enemies; the widely perceived parallel between the two histories has played a major role in the Czech public's general support for Israel.

### ESTONIA

CILJA LAUD,  
CHAIRWOMAN.

#### JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ESTONIA

##### JEWISH IDENTITY

Only 3,500 Jews live in Estonia today, the majority of them in Tallinn, the capital. We also have three small communities in other regions of Estonia, but the overall Estonian Jewish community is unified.

Around 60 percent of the members of the community arrived in Estonia after World War II. As a rule, they lost the Jewish language, religion, and traditions. Restoration of Jewish identity via different programs in education, culture, social life, and religious life is the main goal of our community. The majority of our population is elderly and many of them need social assistance.

##### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Textbooks used by Estonian schools include just three sentences about the Holocaust. The Jewish community asked the former Estonian minister of education why the government had not translated the Holocaust history text *Tell Ye Your Children* (part of the Swedish government's "Living History" project) into Estonian; he responded that "Estonian history textbooks already have enough information about the Holocaust."

The initial conclusions of an Estonian historical commission, established by former president Lennart Meri and chaired by Max Jakobson of Finland, have drawn a negative reaction in Estonia. The commission's mandate is to investigate crimes that occurred during the Nazi and Soviet occupations in Estonia.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

There is no official anti-Semitism in Estonia, nor do Jews experience prejudice in their daily lives. However, Estonian newspapers featured articles criticizing a visit by Efraim Zuroff of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and have asserted that the Holocaust is a “Jewish business.” Juergen Graf’s anti-Semitic work, *The Holocaust Under a Magnifying Glass*, has been translated into Estonian and distributed for free in local bookshops.

Estonian Jews understand clearly that the lack of attention paid by national and local officials to anti-Semitic publications, and the skepticism with which the historical commission’s findings have been received, only strengthen the hand of various Muslim organizations in Estonia. In particular since September 11, these groups have posed a threat to Jews and to all Estonians. The Jewish community has tried to explain its positions through the mass media, as well as in official and unofficial meetings on the national and international levels.

### HUNGARY

**FERENC OLTÍ,  
VICE PRESIDENT,  
ALLIANCE OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN HUNGARY**

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

The Hungarian government has partially restituted communal assets confiscated after the war, which is a matter separate from Holocaust restitution. Holocaust survivors receive something resembling a pension from a government compensation fund.

The following are ongoing issues related to restitution:

- Heirs of those who died in the Holocaust receive unequal treatment compared to heirs of those killed for other politically motivated reasons; the latter receive 30 times as much compensation as those left behind by Holocaust victims. Despite a promise from the government and a ruling by the Constitutional Court, this disparity has not been rectified.
- Assets lost by Jews during the Holocaust that were not directly confiscated by the state (e.g., bank accounts, insurance policies, looted art, securities, real estate, properties abroad) were never returned, nor was their restitution ever discussed. This issue cannot be solved without the active involvement of the state.
- Communal property has not yet been fully restituted, as existing law mandates. The government-created Hungarian Jewish Heritage Fund has not received its initial infusion of assets, including paintings.
- No law has been passed covering the assets of heirless Holocaust victims. In the absence of such a statute, these properties devolve to the state.

- Current Hungarian laws characterizing the use of slave labor as a form of “political absolutism” are not considered to apply to the exploitation of Jewish workers in World War II; rather, Holocaust-era slave labor is covered by the laws of that period. The consequence of this distinction is that heirs of those workers who were not shot by soldiers, but who nonetheless died as a result of their subjugation, are not legally entitled to restitution.
- Money transferred from Switzerland to the Hungarian government as part of a restitution agreement in the 1970s has never reached the individuals for whom the funds were intended; this is in spite of the fact that the identity of the designated recipients has been clearly established.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

In 2000 the Education Ministry declared April 16 an annual Holocaust memorial day. This date is part of the official Hungarian school calendar, and it is practically obligatory to plan some sort of commemoration in every secondary school on or around the day. On the other hand, virtually nothing has been done to correct the problem of Hungary’s history textbooks. An American Jewish Committee study found that the significant majority of the officially approved textbooks contain errors and omissions about the Holocaust, and assign the historical episode less importance than it merits. Teachers, consequently, often do not lecture on the Holocaust, and the topic remains excluded from the list of graduation exam subjects, despite many promises from the government that this would change. Meanwhile, two years after the announcement of plans to create a state-supported Holocaust museum, construction still has not begun.

Hungary has witnessed efforts to minimize or distort the genocidal campaign against the Jews by comparing it to other political mass killings. In addition to the extreme-right political parties and movements, government officials have also played this game. The prime minister and some of his cabinet were present at the re-burial of Hungary’s Holocaust-era leader, Nicholas Horthy, as well as a similar ceremony for a science and education minister turned war criminal; the latter was not legally rehabilitated, however. The extreme right is advocating the rehabilitation of Laszlo Bardossy, the reactionary radical appointed prime minister by Horthy; so far, the government has not definitively refused to support such a move. Thus, despite some evidence of progress, Hungary still has not fully and accurately confronted its past.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

Bias against Jews has grown dramatically in the last several years, and political anti-Semitism has become part of the everyday life of the country. Anti-Semitic discourse is commonplace in the media, particularly on state-owned radio and television. A xenophobic, racist radio station operates in Budapest, in violation of existing law and under the formal control of the extreme-right Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP), which sits in the parliament. The state authorities who granted the station its license ignored hate speech laws in doing so, as have organizations owned or controlled by the state who have used public money to advertise on the station.

As in the darkest days of the Nazi era, the vilest anti-Semitic publications are being reprinted and sold without restriction, including *Mein Kampf* and *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The government has promised several times to strengthen regulations barring anti-Semitic speech and Holocaust denial, but this has not happened, and existing laws are not even enforced.

#### MIDDLE EAST

Reporting on the Middle East in the print and electronic media has been absolutely one-sided in favor of the Palestinians. Anti-Semitic elements among the press are attempting to blame Israel for everything wrong that has happened in the Middle East and around the world. The fact that more neutral figures have also attacked Israel is a sign that they are adopting the views of Western European news agencies who project a similar slant in their own reporting and commentary. Since September 11, 2001, this faction of the media has slightly changed its attitude, while the anti-Semites have not moderated their opinions at all. The attitude of the general public toward Israel is, despite the sometimes very negative propaganda against the Jewish state, quite positive, as people admire Israel's heroic struggle for a peaceful existence. The government's policy toward Israel is fair and friendly; there are few outstanding issues between the two countries, although Israeli officials frequently raise the subject of Hungarian Anti-Semitism.

#### LATVIA

GREGORY KRUPNIKOV,  
CO-CHAIRMAN,  
COUNCIL OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN LATVIA

#### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

Legislation on the return of private and communal religious property has been in place for quite a number of years. Private property is being returned, and there are no residency requirements or other conditions imposed. The appearance of any bureaucratic problems or corruption has not been unique to situations involving Jewish property. The law also provides for the return of communal religious properties, some of which—in Riga, Daugavpils, Liepaja, and other cities—have already been restituted.

Two main problems impede property restitution. First, the community has not always been united in its approach, although this is changing. With the election of a new board of the religious congregation and a new president of the Riga Jewish community, as well as with changes in the constitution of the religious congregation, Latvian Jewry is experiencing a growing unity that should facilitate our effectiveness. Second, much of the property is in the former shtetls of eastern Latvia, where property has no real value. For example, in Rezekne and Ludza the synagogues have been restituted, but both are in terrible shape and need immediate investment to prevent them from collapsing.

Restitution matters are decided by local authorities, rather than by the national government, except in certain cases. The Bikur Holim hospital, for example, was restituted as non-religious property by a special law.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

A lot has been achieved in the past three to four years. A national historical commission is investigating Nazi- and Soviet-era crimes in Latvia. The Swedish book *Tell Ye Your Children*, with an added chapter on the Holocaust in Latvia, has been translated into Latvian and Russian and distributed to every school in Latvia. Both the president and prime minister were present in the synagogue on Purim; the two of them were joined by many other officials at the unveiling of a major Holocaust memorial last November.

Nevertheless, there is room for further progress. One can still occasionally hear or read accusations like "Jews were responsible for Soviet atrocities." The school curriculum does not sufficiently address Holocaust history, despite marked improvements over the past few years. School teachers visit the Holocaust museum in Washington, D.C.; Holocaust seminars are organized; and the Judaic Studies Center at the University of Latvia is quite active and popular. The public in general pays much more attention to the suffering of Latvians under former Soviet rule than to the Holocaust.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

There is no state anti-Semitism. Obviously there is some level of public "street" anti-Semitism, although it does not differ from the degree of anti-Semitism that typically exists in Europe. Two explosions shook Riga's Central Synagogue a number of years ago; a suspect has finally been indicted. An article in the local magazine *Kapitals*, titled "Jews Rule the World," became a major issue, as it was an example of old-fashioned blatant anti-Semitism. The Jewish community failed in its efforts to secure criminal charges, but the publisher nonetheless apologized for the article and fired the editor-in-chief.

### MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East conflict is being reported in an acceptable way. Over the past few years Latvia has followed U.S. voting tendencies on a number of issues affecting Israel, such as those at the World Conference Against Racism in South Africa and the preparatory meetings in Geneva. I do not think that Middle East developments have resulted in any measurable change of attitude leading to anti-Israeli or anti-Jewish displays.

### LITHUANIA

EMANUELIS ZINGERIS,  
CHAIRMAN,  
FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CULTURAL HERITAGE IN  
LITHUANIA

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

A long-awaited breakthrough occurred in January, when the Lithuanian government turned over to world Jewry more than 300 pre-war Torah scrolls that had been seized by the Nazis. Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Michael Melchior heads an international committee charged with distributing the scrolls to Jewish communities around the world.

This development has raised hopes that the Lithuanian government, which lacks a comprehensive policy on Jewish property restitution, will follow suit by returning communal property to Lithuanian Jewry. In fact, the ad hoc committee that arranged for the return of the Torah scrolls could conceivably be reconstituted with expanded responsibilities, to facilitate communal property restitution. Two Soviet-nationalized buildings in downtown Vilnius have been converted for use as the Vilna Gaon Jewish Museum, but that museum is still owned and operated by the state; perhaps government control of the institution could be transferred to a foundation, as has been done with the Jewish museum in Prague. (The museum is currently in need of renovation, but there is no allocation for this purpose in this year's state budget.) As for other unrestituted property, the government should compile an index of communal assets to facilitate their return.

The Seimas (parliament) has passed a remarkable resolution in the past two years, calling for the "restoration of the characteristic elements of the historic Jewish quarter in Vilnius." This measure does not mandate the return of communal property, but it acknowledges the significant contribution of the pre-Holocaust Jewish community to Lithuania's capital. The resolution calls for the "widespread support of the world Jewish community for the restoration of the elements" of Jewish Vilnius, recognizing the need to attract international investment necessary for the restoration project's implementation.

A 1992 law restituting religious property has led to the return of about a dozen buildings. Even with the law in place, however, hundreds of synagogues, yeshivas, and other properties in Vilnius and around the country remain unrestituted. In addition to other factors, the restitution process has been somewhat complicated by internal Jewish differences between the religious and ethnic communal organizations about accession rights to a few synagogues and one cemetery. The prime minister's office created a working group in January, 2001 to jumpstart the process.

To its credit, the Lithuanian government hosted an international conference on Nazi-era looted cultural assets in Vilnius in October, 2000. This gathering confirmed the principle that stolen movable properties without heirs should devolve to the Jewish community. Since then, however, no such assets have been transferred. It therefore remains for the state to implement the conclusions of the Vilnius conference, as well as earlier government decrees mandating the return of looted assets. The state should collect stolen properties currently housed in local museums and shift them to the Jewish museum in Vilnius.

#### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

September 23, the anniversary of the fall of the Vilna Ghetto, is an official day of Holocaust commemoration in Lithuania.

Lithuania is expected to assume full membership on an international task force on Holocaust education. While Lithuanian history textbooks have recently been revised by the Ministry of Education to include added information on the Holocaust, and the Defense Ministry has ordered that its soldiers be distributed instructional pamphlets on the subject, these are just first steps. Textbooks should contain much more information about the Holocaust and Jewish history, and Lithuania's Jewish heritage should be taught as an integral part of the country's past, rather than as a historical footnote.



Thousands of anti-Soviet, pro-Nazi war criminals were rehabilitated in the early 1990s. The government later reversed the decrees in several hundred cases, but the “dehabilitation” process still must be completed. After a long record of failure to bring Nazi war criminals to justice, Lithuanian prosecutors finally secured a conviction against former security police commander Kazys Gimzauskas in February, 2001, although the court ruled the 93-year-old defendant too ill for incarceration. Gimzauskas’ conviction was facilitated by the passage a year earlier of legislation allowing for criminal defendants who are physically incapacitated or otherwise unavailable for court appearances to be tried *in absentia*.

In 1998 Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus created an international commission, which was given responsibility for researching the events of the Holocaust in Lithuania. The International Commission for the Evaluation of Crimes Committed by the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes includes members from Lithuania and abroad and has recently concluded a cooperative arrangement with Yad Vashem. It is in the process of publishing its findings, but it is hampered by a very limited budget.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

Lithuanian intellectuals of the older generation would argue that only the appearance of anti-Semitism exists in their country, and that casual, marginal hatred of Jews has no significance. However, a poll taken two years ago by the leading Lithuanian daily, *Lietuvos Rytas*, revealed Jews to be among Lithuania’s least popular national minorities, surpassed only by Roma. The results showed that despite the increasing availability of information on Jews, typified by the government’s highly promoted release of new textbooks with a more in-depth treatment of Jewish history and the Holocaust, some anti-Semitic attitudes still prevail in Lithuania.

At the same time, anti-Semitic stereotypes are slowly fading from the parlance of the educated youth. The language of the mass media has become less crude in the last two or more years, although anti-Semitic content resurfaces with unexpected force in public discussions on the Middle East, particularly in anonymous exchanges on the Internet.

It is hard to say whether current anti-Semitism is simply more masked and refined, or whether it has been tamed by education. There may be other reasons for the gradual disappearance of anti-Semitism from public discourse, such as the deterrent effect of the recent scandal involving the daily paper *Lietuvos Aidas*, which was punished by authorities for an obvious anti-Semitic campaign featuring some 50 articles disparaging Jews. The movement to integrate Lithuania into European structures, combined with the fact that anti-Jewish attitudes are often perceived as anti-Western, as well, further detracts from anti-Semitism’s popularity in Lithuania. Moreover, the public has simply become less interested in Jewish matters, including the well-worn topic of Lithuanian-Jewish relations, which drew much more attention in the years immediately following independence. Also, the label of anti-Semitism carries a shameful stigma, which is why even the neo-Nazi Mindaugas Murza, who has joined the small but politically mainstream National Democratic Party, felt compelled to deny accusations of anti-Semitism in a newspaper interview. (Murza’s protestations are contradicted by the fact that his compatriots in the city of Shauliai publish a

notoriously anti-Semitic paper, *Nacijos Balsas*, whose frequent *Der Sturmer*-type tirades against the Jews recall the days of the Nazi propaganda machine.)

In my view, anti-Semitism has not disappeared—it just has acquired a more latent form. It may appear, for example, in public attitudes and official statements against the restoration of the Vilnius Jewish historical quarter. The surge in anti-Semitic expression that occurs in Internet discussions on the Middle East is remarkable, though.

#### MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East conflict is depicted in the Lithuanian media as a “vicious cycle,” without reference to the motive for Israel’s defensive military operations. The public is therefore left with the impression of a tit-for-tat struggle. The word “occupation,” frequently used by the media to define Israel’s relationship with Palestinian-inhabited territories, strikes a chord of resentment from the Lithuanian public, which has witnessed decades of Soviet control.

Newspaper editorials and opinion columns often lack accuracy, sophistication, and depth; as a result, anonymous feedback messages from misinformed readers to Internet media websites are often crudely anti-Semitic, employing the same Jewish conspiracy and “Jews rule America” stereotypes as those that circulate in the Arab world. Posted e-mail missives that react to Middle East events sometimes echo the anti-Semitic sentiments of the older, prewar generation, whose attitudes foreshadowed the Holocaust. Informed, rational views revealing true comprehension of the Middle East situation are the exception, not the rule.

#### MACEDONIA

**VIKTOR MIZRAHI,  
PRESIDENT,  
JEWISH COMMUNITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

**ZDRAVKO SAMI,  
COORDINATOR,  
JEWISH COMMUNITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

#### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

##### PROPERTY OF JEWS WITHOUT LEGAL HEIRS

The first law on denationalization was enacted in 1998, upon the insistence of the World Bank. However, the necessary bylaws for implementation were never adopted. Furthermore, the Supreme Court abolished a number of the law’s strictures in 1999, thus making the statute ineffectual.

On May 30, 2000 the parliament enacted a law mandating that heirless properties of Jewish Holocaust victims be included in a special-purpose fund for a Holocaust memorial museum honoring the 7,200 Macedonian Jews who perished. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for establishing a steering committee featuring two government officials and two members of the Jewish Community of the Republic of Macedonia; the committee would arrange for the inclusion of these assets in the fund.

The Jewish community has assigned two of its representatives to the steering committee, which has not yet been convened. Last year's security crisis partially accounts for the inactivity, as government authorities have been occupied with more pressing matters. Early elections this year might cause additional delays. We expect that once the steering committee begins its work, it will face problems resolving ownership issues that have developed since World War II.

#### **PROPERTY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY**

The Jewish community sent a letter to the Macedonian government on December 16, 1997, proposing a settlement covering property claimed by the community; the government accepted the proposal in principle. Last September the community retained a lawyer to prepare a document contending that Macedonian Jewry should be awarded, as compensation, appropriate operating facilities in Skopje. The value of these premises would not necessarily equal that of the assets claimed by the community, but gaining control of the property would at least allow the community to satisfactorily conduct its activities. As it appears that this proposal is acceptable to the government, we expect to see it implemented sometime this year.

#### **ASSETS LOOTED BY BULGARIAN FASCIST OCCUPATION FORCES**

In cooperation with the Jewish community, a government committee prepared a report in October, 1998 showing that Bulgarian fascist occupation forces seized assets (e.g., jewelry, tax revenues, cash, commercial property) worth an overall current value of \$16,498,383.95 in U.S. currency, as of the date of the report. Those funds were deposited in a special-purpose account at the Bulgarian national bank. The Jewish community is claiming the funds, which it intends to use for civil society development projects. However, the government has not shown any willingness to become involved in this issue.

#### **HOLOCAUST MEMORY**

After the Stockholm conference on the Holocaust in January, 2000, the government decided to build a Holocaust memorial museum in Skopje, in the old Jewish quarter. Responsibility for implementation of this project lies primarily with the Ministry of Culture, as well as with the Ministry of Transport and Urban Planning, and the Finance Ministry. Several preliminary preparatory meetings have been held, but construction has not started yet.

Every March 11 the Jewish community organizes a commemoration of the wartime deportation of 7,200 Jews from the Macedonian towns of Bitola, Stip and Skopje to the extermination camp in Treblinka. National and local authorities actively participate in these ceremonies. These commemorations are usually accompanied by articles in the print media; special broadcasts on national and local television and radio; concerts; etc. The Ministry of Education usually organizes school lessons on the subject.

The Jewish community has started a multi-phase project for reconstruction of the Jewish cemetery in Bitola, established in 1497. The portal of this cemetery has been declared a national historical-cultural monument, and the Ministry of Culture has co-financed its reconstruction.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

In general, Macedonian history has witnessed little apparent anti-Semitism. However, in November, 2000 the Bitola cemetery was desecrated with anti-Semitic signs and scrawlings. The perpetrators, a group of nine juvenile delinquents, were soon arrested. This crime produced very loud protests from the public, prompting the government to restore the portal.

### MIDDLE EAST

National officials typically have a positive view toward Israel. Very often Israel is held up as an example for Macedonians, because of both its high rate of national development and the way it has dealt with its hostile environment.

We do not expect that the Middle East situation will have any negative consequences for the Jewish community, which maintains very friendly relations with leaders of the Macedonian Islamic community. Certainly, one cannot rule out the occurrence of some extremist incidents, especially given the country's current inter-ethnic tensions.

### POLAND

KONSTANTY GEBERT,  
PUBLISHER,  
*MIDRASZ*

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

A law titled "On the Relationship Between the State and the Jewish Religious Communities" was enacted in May, 1997—the last of a series of such laws passed in the aftermath of communism's end—to regulate relations between the state and the different recognized religions. This latest statute contains a section on restitution of property that had belonged to Jewish religious communities before the war. The law differentiates between property existing on territory that before the war also belonged to Poland, and territory that before the war belonged to Germany but is now Polish, as restitution is somewhat easier in the first case. For obvious reasons the law does not affect the status of Jewish property on territories lost by Poland to the then-Soviet Union. Rather, it applies solely to property of former religious organizations, and makes the recognized Union of Jewish Religious Congregations in Poland (UJRCP) the sole heir. No legal provisions currently exist for the restitution of individual property. Relevant legislation passed last year by parliament, which would have discriminated against Jewish property owners or their heirs (but also against Poles living abroad) because of current citizenship requirements, was vetoed by the president. Under the conditions of the current economic crisis, any individual property restitution (regardless of the religion or ethnicity of its prewar owner) would be vastly unpopular.

Any cemeteries or synagogues on prewar Polish territory that belonged to state or local authorities at the moment the restitution law was enacted automatically become property of the UJRCP once their prewar status can be proved. Any other property transfer has to be approved by a bilateral regulatory commission composed equally of representatives of the government and of the UJRCP. No appeal to a court

is possible. This setup gives the government de facto veto power; so far, it has used it sparingly. Jewish communal property in the hands of state or local authorities can either be returned to the UJRCP or compensated for. Legitimate rights of third parties have to be respected.

The right of the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations in Poland to act as sole heir of the communal property of Polish Jewry was from the very onset hotly challenged by the World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO), which desired this status for itself. After a protracted period of wrangling, a compromise was reached. A common foundation was set up to administer the restituted property, and a scheme for the division of such property and possible income derived from it was agreed upon. Some cases of possibly fraudulent dealings by UJRCP officers were discovered, and the Union moved quickly to punish those responsible. Also, spurious Jewish organizations were set up in some localities to try to profit from restitution. Such attempts have so far been unsuccessful.

State authorities have, to date, been reasonably cooperative; local authorities, much less so. The main problem is completing the necessary legal and land registry documents to prove that a piece of real estate had in fact been Jewish property. The relevant documentation is often unavailable or incomplete due to wartime ravages, and access is difficult. The WJRO claims to possess such documentation, but has been reluctant to share it with the UJRCP. Restitution requests have to be filed by May, 2002. Current Prime Minister Leszek Miller said at a meeting with Jewish organizations in New York in December, 2001 that this deadline might be extended.

#### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Because so much of World War II happened on Polish soil, and because of the traumatic impact this had on the nation's identity, events connected with the Shoah are both commemorated and taught in Poland. Until recently, however, they were presented with a specific angle: as part of Polish, rather than Jewish, history. The Jewish victims of the Shoah were seen mainly as "Polish citizens," and references to their Jewishness were obliterated or kept at a minimal level. This is changing, though, with commemorative and informational material at Shoah sites gradually reflecting more of the Jewish character of the event.

The situation is worse with regard to school curricula, as the Shoah is portrayed to students only as a marginal aspect of the struggle of the Polish nation against Nazism. Though some textbooks do establish the proper proportions, others contain outright anti-Semitic material. On the other hand, two academic centers for the study of the Shoah have recently been set up, in the universities in Gdansk and Krakow. Finally, the recent debate around the massacre of Jews by Poles in Jedwabne in 1941 has heightened public sensitivity to the issue and, by challenging the overriding myth of Polish guiltlessness, enabled a reassessment of the study of that dimension of the wartime period.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

According to different public opinion polls, some 20 percent of the Polish population accepts or endorses anti-Semitic statements—a level higher, but not dramatically so, than in most other countries of the region. About twice that number reject such statements, and both indices have been growing over the last dozen years, reflecting the polariz-

ing impact of the issue on public opinion. It is important to note that anti-Semitism usually does not have much in common with reacting to, or even having an opinion of, what the diminutive Polish Jewish community does or does not do; it is, rather, an index of a set of illiberal, nationalistic and fundamentalist attitudes characteristic of a part of Polish society. As such, anti-Semitism was and continues to be used in politics; last year's elections have brought into parliament two new right-wing populist parties, one of which—the League of Polish Families—is overtly anti-Semitic.

The very influential Catholic church is mostly receptive to anti-Semitic ideas, and many Catholic media propagate it. Anti-Semitism is usually tolerated, and rarely condemned, as it is seen as a particular problem of Jews—not a threat to democracy as such. Liberal intellectual milieus and segments of the Catholic church have been active in denouncing anti-Semitism, and the recent Jedwabne debate seems to have given their efforts a boost.

#### MIDDLE EAST

Israel used to enjoy a favorable image in Polish public opinion, as the Arabs were seen as allied with Moscow, Poland's arch-nemesis. Another contributing factor was that so many Israelis came from Poland, and ties of friendship, or of *landsmen* solidarity, remained. Israelis were not seen as "Jews," in the sense of the negative stereotype associated with the latter. Finally, the right wing saw in Israel a country implementing values and policies Poland should in their eyes emulate: a strong state with a powerful and popular military and a widely accepted national-religious ideology, one that does not let its neighbors push it around.

Some of the positive associations have since dissipated, as the mainstream media has reported, and often distorted, the plight of the Palestinians. There is a consensus that Israel uses excessive force, and possibly wanton cruelty, in retaliating against Palestinian attacks, and Ariel Sharon is considered a war criminal. Internet chat lists are infused with hatred, with many participants alleging that the reprehensible behavior Israel is charged with stems from the "nature" of the Jews.

None of this has affected the security of Jewish and Israeli institutions, nor the popularity of events organized by them. The Israeli ambassador is a much-loved media star, and strong support of Israel is often voiced, even if from right-wing quarters. One possibly unexpected source of pro-Israel sympathies is the Polish military; many officers who have served in Syria and Lebanon have returned with a depth of pro-Israel commitment that would make Uzi Landau look like a wimp.

**POLAND**

**JERZY KICHLER,  
PRESIDENT,  
UNION OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN POLAND**

**STANISLAW KRAJEWSKI,  
BOARD MEMBER,  
UNION OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN POLAND;  
POLISH CONSULTANT, THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

A 1997 law has given to Jewish religious communities and their umbrella group the right to claim properties that belonged to Jewish communities before World War II and were once used for religious, educational, and social purposes. (The law does not apply to properties formerly belonging to individuals.) The communities have begun to gather data, and to claim properties lost as a result of the German occupation, the Holocaust, and postwar Communist confiscations. Some of them now generate or may potentially draw income, which will be used for the support of communal activities and for preserving Jewish heritage in Poland. The law distinguishes between properties of Central and Eastern Poland on the one hand, and Western Poland (lands that belonged to Germany before 1939) on the other. In the latter case, each claim must be supported by arguments that the real estate in question can be used by the present-day Jewish community for religious or educational activities or social services.

After a long process of negotiations, an agreement has been reached between Polish Jews and the World Jewish Restitution Organization. A joint foundation is currently under construction. It will claim properties in the provinces where no Jewish groups exist today, and take over claims already filed by the individual communities and the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland (UJRCP).

The government generally works together with us in this process. A joint commission has been established, with half the members representing the government, and the other half, the UJRCP. The commission decides each claim using a court-of-law-like procedure. The result may be either restitution, compensation, or rejection. Altogether about 1,040 claims have been filed as of January, 2002; about 185 have been decided on, 170 of them positively. Forthcoming claims will include more than 1,000 Jewish cemeteries. Their proper upkeep is a moral obligation and will constitute a heavy financial burden; the income from restitution will probably never be sufficient.

The main problem is time, as the legal deadline for filing claims is May, 2002. Polish Jews believe that an extension of this period is necessary, because since the Shoah it has been especially difficult and time-consuming to find the relevant data in archives, as well as in other places in Poland and abroad. The present Prime Minister has spoken positively about the possibility of an extension. *Our primary need is to get enough domestic and international support to secure the appropriate legislation in the parliament.*

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

The Shoah is generally regarded as a factual event. Schools used to present the Holocaust as a rather small part of the suffering of Poland during World War II, but in recent years the specific character of the murder of Jews has been shown somewhat more clearly. Auschwitz is increasingly known as a symbol of the Shoah, not just of Polish martyrdom. At the same time, for youth, that era is more and more abstract. Special educational programs are needed; the first proposals for such initiatives have already appeared.

Holocaust denial has appeared in the form of translations of Western publications, but the general public has reacted strongly against it. The 2001 debate on the massacre of Jews in Jedwabne in 1941, by Polish neighbors under German supervision, has opened a remarkable confrontation with one of the most shameful and painful events in Poland's history. Other formerly taboo subjects have slowly become topics for discussion, for example, the loss of Jewish-owned property, and postwar pogroms.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

Jews have full rights and are not restricted in their careers. Yet anti-Semitism is widespread, even if hard to assess. The controversies over Auschwitz and Jedwabne show the tensions that exist. Blaming Jews for misfortunes is common. It must be noted that this happens mostly through speech, rather than actions. Poland enjoys complete freedom of religion, but men in kippot rarely feel comfortable in the streets.

Anti-Semitic literature is easily available. Graffiti, such as stars of David hanging on gallows, can easily be found in most Polish cities. Skinhead and neo-Nazi groups have been growing. In some circles, notably among football fans, the term "Jew" is used as an insult.

Most anti-Semitic expressions refer to historic and symbolic images. Restitution can provide another type of pretext for anti-Semitism. In general, the idea of individual restitution (to *any* former owners) is not accepted by a majority of Polish voters, millions of whom might lose something in the process. What impact it may have on attitudes toward Jews is unclear, and depends on the region and the situation.

In the 2001 elections, some politicians with anti-Semitic records were elected to the parliament. Although anti-Semitism is condemned by a majority of serious Polish leaders, it seems to be given low priority. It is not uncommon to find people who deny the existence of anti-Semitism.

### MIDDLE EAST

The Arab-Israeli conflict has been extensively reported in the press. In general, the picture presented is fair. While the Israeli perspective is not well understood in Poland, pro-Arab attitudes are even more rare. Israeli officials like Shimon Peres, or the present Ambassador, Shevach Weiss, are met with more sympathy and understanding in the major media than anyone else involved in the conflict.

Only very few Poles use the Middle East conflict to express anti-Semitic attitudes. No anti-Jewish actions in Poland have resulted from the conflict. The number of Muslims and Palestinians is very small and, so far, no fundamentalist activists have appeared among them.



## ROMANIA

RADU F. ALEXANDRU,  
LEADER, NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY  
GROUP,  
SENATE OF ROMANIA

### HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION

The Holocaust assets problem is complicated by the fact that the restitution process has long been postponed in Romania, not only for individuals but for religious communities, too. Romania was the last of the former communist countries to pass restitution legislation, and there is a big difference between writing laws and implementing them.

A few steps have been taken toward restitution of Jewish communal property. Authorities stress the need for a comprehensive solution for all who suffered hostile dispossession. It is hard to dismiss this position, because of the large number of restitution candidates—foremost among them the Church—and the fear that if the Jewish community is singled out, anti-Semitism will spectacularly and unfortunately soar. The result is an incremental government policy, one in which promises are made to everyone, but the solution satisfies no one.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

One could say without exaggeration that only the most insignificant progress has been made in this domain. Even today, the Romanian people does not know its history. Romanians lived almost 50 years under a totalitarian regime that propagated a mythical national history; now they find themselves in total ignorance, particularly about the World War II era. Attempts to speak the truth about that period have become taboo in the face of former dictator Ion Antonescu's cultish legacy, which is kept alive by the worst journalists and "historians" masquerading as academics. Jewish suffering is examined through the hagiographic view of Antonescu as "the Jewish people's savior"; proponents of this version of history cite the fact that Romania had no extermination camps, while in other countries (particularly Hungary and Hungarian-controlled territories in Romania), the Jewish people's destiny was decided by the "Final Solution." Meanwhile, Antonescu's unconditional support of Hitler is presented as an aspect of the crusade against communism.

This is the common ground on which politicians, accomplished intellectuals, and journalists meet. Those who do not share their opinions are somewhat smaller in number and much, much weaker in voice.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism is a current phenomenon in Romanian society, although it is hard to estimate the degree to which it is present. Judging from the results of the most recent elections, one might say that anti-Semitism is peaking: Those contests saw Corneliu Vadim Tudor's neo-fascist Greater Romania Party (PRM) finish second in parliamentary races, while Tudor himself forced Ion Iliescu into a runoff presidential election. I think this characterization of anti-Semitism's rise would be an overstatement, though. Anti-Semitism has a long history in Romania, one that includes maximal forms of violence, but there are other expressions of anti-Semitism, as well. The combination of several of these

manifestations suggests a latent but discernible anti-Semitism. Such factors include: the extremely large number of books with a declared anti-Semitic message; periodicals in the same vein appearing all over the country; and the deep support of the fascist Legionnaire movement among students and other young people. All anti-Semitic materials, whether editorial or promotional in nature, flagrantly violate Romanian law by virtue of their content; the same is true of the Legionnaire ideology, as fascism is legally prohibited in Romania. The authorities do not interfere with these offenders, though I would describe their inaction more as a sign of willfully blind detachment than of complicity.

#### **MIDDLE EAST**

The views of the average Romanian citizen on the Middle East conflict are largely shaped by television and newspaper images. These opinions are not well formed, as it is unclear to Romanians whom the aggressor and whom the victim are in the Middle East. I do not think that perceptions about Israel have translated into anti-Semitism in Romania. However, I do not think that Romanians feel solidarity with the Jewish people in their constant struggle against terrorism.

To Romanian politicians, it is as if the subject of the Middle East does not exist.

#### **ROMANIA**

**DOREL DORIAN,  
DEPUTY LEADER, NATIONAL MINORITIES PARLIAMENTARY  
GROUP CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES**

**NICOLAE CAJAL,  
PRESIDENT,  
FEDERATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN ROMANIA**

**SORIN IULIAN,  
SECRETARY GENERAL,  
FEDERATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN ROMANIA**

#### **HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

In order to provide the most accurate assessment of the restitution picture, communal assets should be divided into two categories.

A. The first category involves properties once used for religious purposes. The so-called "Mosaic Cult Statutes," approved by the Great National Assembly in 1949, acknowledged the Federation of Jewish Communities as successor-owner of the study houses, synagogues, cemeteries, ritual baths, and kosher slaughterhouses formerly run by the Mosaic Cult. In this context, we merely seek compensation for communal religious properties demolished or converted to other use during the Holocaust or communist eras.

Unfortunately, the Federation in many cases has no documents certifying ownership of the Cult's synagogues and cemeteries, most of which were established in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. We anticipate talks in the near future to discuss legal ownership of communal properties over which the Jewish community has had de facto control from the begin-

ning. A regulation clarifying Jewish ownership would lead to the issuance of official registration documents, which in turn would facilitate the adequate protection and, implicitly, preservation of these sites.

B. The second category of assets includes approximately 800 Jewish hospitals, schools, retirement homes, administrative buildings, and other communal properties arbitrarily seized by the communist regime. A charitable organization co-founded by the Federation and the World Jewish Restitution Organization has made concerted efforts over the past 10 years to recover these properties. Since 1997 several new government measures have led to the return of approximately 40 of these sites, around 30 of which have actually accrued to the charitable foundation.

According to Law No. 10 of 2001, concerning the retrocession of arbitrarily seized property, most of the buildings to which the Federation can lay claim—specifically, those in which public institutions are housed or some other state interest exists—need not be returned to the Jewish community, which must be compensated for their loss. The same predicament applies to nine or 10 thousand private property claims, only in those cases there are no established guidelines for financial remuneration.

The matter of restitution for ethnic discrimination creates an additional category of claims. The Romanian government has established special compensation rights for deportees and other victims of Holocaust-era persecution; more than a third of the present-day Romanian Jewish population is entitled to such funds, as are Jews of Romanian origin now living abroad.

#### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Every year the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania—with the cooperation of government officials, political parties, and non-Jewish religious groups—organizes commemorations of the pogroms and deportations of the Holocaust era. A Holocaust museum has been created in Bucharest; a separate Jewish history museum contains special display rooms in the same spirit of remembrance. Various cities and towns across the country have erected Holocaust monuments, while a special memorial resides on the grounds of the Choral Temple in Bucharest.

According to curricula designed by the Ministry of Education, high school and college students must take special courses on the Holocaust. Teachers have attended training seminars on Holocaust education, both within Romania and abroad. The content of these Holocaust courses is insubstantial, however, and many of the classes are held just for formality's sake. This situation has prompted the Federation to suggest to the education Ministry that Jewish representatives be invited to attend the sessions to teach about the culture and customs of the community.

Both the mainstream and radical media have given Holocaust deniers an audience. Surveying the pages of Romanian publications, one finds efforts to minimize the Holocaust and the deportation of Jews to Transnistria, as well as arguments for rehabilitating and memorializing World War II-era fascist leaders, and publishing revisionist texts. The Federation has therefore asked the government to issue an ordi-

nance compelling compliance with constitutional provisions and state policies restricting extremist activities; once the ordinance has become law, it should be very beneficial.

#### **ANTI-SEMITISM**

Romania is not an anti-Semitic country, but anti-Semitic impulses manifest themselves on some television stations and in extremist publications. The magazine of the Greater Romania Party (PRM) prints revisionist articles praising the fascist Iron Guard and former dictator Ion Antonescu, while defaming the Talmud and denigrating national minorities. Offensive graffiti featuring fascist slogans and rallying cries can be found in public, as can right-wing manifestos. Such activities are limited in scope, though, and are opposed by government officials. A future ordinance prohibiting anti-Semitic behavior and making it punishable should, one hopes, curtail the proliferation of such hateful displays.

#### **MIDDLE EAST**

Romania and Israel have a longstanding close relationship, one of friendship and cooperation. However, both the mass media and fringe publications feature biased reports on the Middle East conflict, in which the Israelis are blamed for reacting to terrorist provocations. Of course, the recent escalation of violence in the Middle East is misinterpreted or distorted in certain circles; while this regrettably leads to resentment of Israel by some segments of society, relations with Israel remain, on the whole, predominantly positive. A great number of Romanians work in Israel, and the resulting economic and cultural exchanges have made a favorable impact. Except for some of those mentioned above, Romanians view the national and international Jewish communities with respect, as well as evident consideration and sympathy.

#### **SLOVAKIA**

**FERO ALEXANDER,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
UNION OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE SLOVAK  
REPUBLIC**

#### **HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

The first restitution law (number 128/46) was introduced in 1946, right after the Second World War. It concerned all Jewish private property that had been confiscated or otherwise improperly gained during the war. This law remained in effect from 1946 until the communist takeover in 1948. Some individuals and institutions managed to retrieve their properties, but heirless property and assets of persons abroad were not returned to anyone.

The next restitution laws were Czechoslovak federal statutes, numbers 403/90 and 87/91. Both were intended to retribute Jewish and non-Jewish properties alike, as long as those assets had been taken by the communist regime (either by confiscation or as forced gifts or underestimated sales) after February 25, 1948. A subsequent 1993 law restituting communal religious property for Jews and other groups left those communities disappointed, as the statute placed restrictions on the range

of property that was eligible for restitution. Claims filed in eastern Slovakia went much less smoothly and quickly than the ones in Bratislava.

With the help of Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in the Slovak Republic (UZZNO) in 1998 won reimbursement for the so-called "Slovak Jewish golden deposit" of 1940, the terms of which required Jews to deposit their gold in the national bank. The wartime national bank governor, Imrich Karvas, was a just man who personally barred the shipment of the gold deposit to Switzerland; the assets remained in Slovakia until after the war. After a two-year battle, UZZNO successfully claimed a reimbursement equaling \$600,000 in U.S. currency, which it transferred to a foundation; the money is being used for the Ohel David retirement home in Bratislava and a day care center in Kosice, both of which serve Holocaust survivors.

The 500 reichsmarks that was paid by the Slovak government to the Nazis for the deportation of Jews in 1942 remains an unsolved problem. (The Slovak payment was drawn from the looted assets of the Jewish deportees, meaning that the Jews effectively paid for their own murder.) After being rebuffed by the German Finance Ministry and the offices of Germany's chancellor and president, UZZNO has filed a lawsuit against the German government for the return of the funds Jews are owed; to support its case, the Jewish community has collected documents proving that 200 million wartime Slovak crowns (18 million reichsmarks) were paid in 1943. UZZNO's standing to raise this claim was challenged at a Berlin proceeding, and the suit was dismissed on March 28, 2001. An appeal heard on February 21, 2002 has not been decided on yet.

After more than two and a half years of pressure by UZZNO, the Slovak government has finally established a property commission, which features both government officials and Jewish representatives. The goal of the commission is to identify the unrestituted properties of murdered Slovak Jews and to find a solution to the problem of ownership. For its part, the Jewish community is tasked with providing social services and preserving the cultural heritage of those who built the once flourishing Jewish presence in what today is the Slovak Republic. The commission first convened on December 4, 2001 and subsequently hired a panel of independent experts and historians from the Slovak Academy of Sciences to prepare a report on property issues arising out of the World War II era; their findings will form the basis for a proposal to the government. Ten Jewish representatives sit on the commission, seven of them from the Slovak community; the other three represent four different organizations: the American Jewish Committee; B'nai B'rith International; the World Jewish Congress; and the World Jewish Restitution Organization.

#### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Holocaust instruction has begun in Slovak high schools, with the help of a small pamphlet recently published by the Education Ministry. A group of history teachers visited Yad Vashem for a series of lectures on the Holocaust and took quite an interest in the subject; another 20 teachers are expected to follow them, according to a Slovak-Israeli cultural agreement. Slovak President Rudolph Schuster presented awards honoring the Righteous Among the Nations at an event that was widely

covered by the press. Several films about Holocaust survivors have been televised; both UZZNO and the Jewish museum in Bratislava have been involved in these projects.

Attempts to minimize the Holocaust and rehabilitate World War II-era fascist leaders presently seem to occur only at the margins of Slovak society, as the country is focused less on its past than on its current unemployment rate of 20 percent. Meanwhile, Roma are discriminated against, as is the Hungarian national minority.

#### **ANTI-SEMITISM**

As Slovakia has a small Jewish population and Jews are not very visible in high positions, we do not suffer from anti-Semitism. When a cemetery is vandalized, the police cooperate with the Jewish community and, in some cases, have been able to locate the perpetrators. Certainly, when local officials show an interest in eliminating vandalism from their cities, such acts are less likely to occur.

#### **MIDDLE EAST**

People have other problems besides the Middle East conflict; in fact, they do not care very much about it. Most of the daily papers cover the issue more-or-less objectively and sufficiently. Until recently, Slovakia has not been a country where refugees seek asylum; today there are still only a small number of Muslims in the country.

#### **SLOVENIA**

**ANDREJ KOZAR-BECK,  
PRESIDENT,  
JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SLOVENIA**

#### **HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION**

The issue of restitution has a long history of attempted solutions and failures. In the late Sixties survivors living in what was then Yugoslavia thought they would be awarded restitution under the Brandt-Tito agreement. While the Yugoslav government did receive damages, including compensation for survivors, the money never reached the individuals for whom it was intended.

The situation that followed the fall of communism, the independence of Slovenia, and the "rebirth" of the local Jewish community was similar to what occurred in the rest of post-communist Europe. Restitution had to be negotiated, not only because of the thousands of survivors in Eastern Europe who had never been paid any damages, but also because the archives clearly disclosed the amount of looted Jewish assets.

Material restitution in Slovenia, especially that related to denationalisation of real estate, nevertheless remains an open issue. Although real estate and remaining material assets belonging to the predecessors of the present-day community have been returned to the Jewish Community of Slovenia (the legitimate successor), the question of ownership of material assets formerly belonging to Jewish victims without heirs has not been resolved.

### HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Public debate on the Holocaust and on Holocaust memory in Slovenia was initiated by a group of historians, publishers, and journalists who organized a roundtable forum in the mid-Nineties to discuss the various forms of public speech related to the topic.

President Milan Kucan made a major statement concerning the Holocaust in Slovenia when he addressed an international conference in Stockholm in January, 2000. At a press conference following his speech, he sharply rebutted the claim that the Holocaust never happened in Slovenia because there were no Jews there, explaining that Slovenian Jews shared the fate of millions of others across Europe. He also stressed the importance of educating young generations and preserving historical memory.

The Holocaust in school curricula is approached at different levels and through different topics. Somewhat surprisingly, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is not found among compulsory reading materials. History books for elementary and secondary schools cover the topic of the Holocaust to a satisfactory degree. The events that followed World War II, such as the establishment of the State of Israel and the pre- and postwar history of Jews in Slovenia, are not sufficiently explored, however. The Holocaust is also dealt with in lessons on geography, sociology (Nazism and fascism), etc.

### ANTI-SEMITISM

In the past 10 years there have been some explicit manifestations of anti-Semitism. At the beginning of the 1990s swastikas were painted on tombstones in the Jewish cemetery in Ljubljana. The perpetrators of the offense were never found and brought to trial. The community also received phone threats, which were reported to the police. An investigation was undertaken; the media also responded. In addition to these examples, there are also several obscure neo-Nazi web pages inciting hatred. The general feeling within the community, as well as among the larger society, is that there is no direct anti-Semitism, as its explicit manifestations are rare and usually attributed not to hate groups but, rather, to youths under the influence of alcohol. While implicit forms of anti-Semitism are harder to perceive, Slovenian Jews nonetheless tend to agree that they are present.

Preparations for a scientific conference on manifestations of anti-Semitism in Southeastern Europe are currently underway.

**PREPARED SUBMISSION OF  
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My name is Ken Jacobson, I am the Associate National Director of the Anti-Defamation League, an organization that has worked to expose and counter anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry since 1913. We have developed proactive anti-bias education programs being implemented in Europe today which address precisely the kind of intolerance and hate speech that targets Jews and other minorities in Europe.

We are grateful to the Helsinki Commission, for holding these important hearings and appreciate the opportunity to share some observations and recommendations.

It is wholly appropriate for the Helsinki Commission to examine this issue. Not just because the OSCE was the first leading international body to formally recognize and condemn the problem of anti-Semitism in 1990; not just on humanitarian grounds; but as a matter of American national security as well. As peoples who value pluralism, religious freedom, and tolerance, Americans, and Jews have been the targets of choice for haters and extremists. Our own observations have been that, where Jews are scapegoated and demonized, incendiary anti-American rhetoric flourishes as well.

Over the past 20 months we have grown increasingly alarmed by a wave of anti-Semitic attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions in Europe. In France, Belgium, Great Britain and elsewhere, we have witnessed violence against synagogues, Jewish schools, cemeteries, as well as Jewish-owned businesses, and physical attacks on identifiable Jews on the street. Until recently, much of Europe's leadership has not taken the attacks seriously. In France, where the problem is most acute, political leaders viewed such incidents as examples of "hooliganism" by some violent Muslim immigrant youth, or as a logical and understandable spillover of Middle East tensions. Only in recent weeks have these incidents been labeled as hate crimes and condemned by leaders. Yet, even now, the judicial system has treated those perpetrators that have been apprehended far too leniently.

The global anti-Semitism that we speak of is old in the sense that anti-Semitism around the globe is not a new phenomenon. These manifestations of anti-Semitism are not novel—the elements—scapegoating of Jews for societies' problems; the impact of religious extremism; the use of conspiracy theories to blame the Jews for everything are all too familiar.

What are new are the manifestations of anti-Semitism which correspond to globalism, a world of greater economic, political, technological, and ideological interaction and interdependence. The most obvious example of this and a warning for the future was the way Malaysian Prime Minister Mohammed Mahatir explained his nation's economic collapse during the Asian economic bust of the late 1990s. In a country devoid of Jews, Mahatir, rather than trying to explain the complicated interaction of a global economy which could enrich and impoverish nations in disparate places, blamed international Jewish currency dealers. The mother of conspiracy theories—secret Jewish control of the world—was shown to be alive and well. The warning flag was up: the more global the economy, the more likely that distant nations would be



affected by decisions made thousands of miles away—giving demagogues the opportunity to divert attention from their own failures to simplistic, false, but emotionally satisfying canard that it is all the Jews' fault.

Global anti-Semitism has other characteristics. One is the tendency to transport hatred from one region to another. In the Middle East, a surge of Arab and Islamic anti-Semitic propaganda stirred up millions against Jews. This anti-Semitism affects the willingness of individuals to commit suicidal acts of terror and of nations to acquire non-conventional weapons to threaten America's and Israel's very existence.

Through the magic of television, the incitement in the Middle East resonates with millions of Muslims in Western Europe. In France, in particular, the Jews have been the target of more incidents this year than in any year since the Holocaust, many committed by Muslim residents in France influenced by the tub-thumping anti-Semitism of Al-Jazeera television out of Qatar and reinforced by biased, anti-Israel media coverage within France.

The Internet has also become a useful vehicle, not only for transnational but also for transideological anti-Semitism. This has been in evidence in events surrounding September 11. The conspiracy theory that the Mossad was behind the attack, based on an absurd rumor that 4,000 Jews stayed home from work at the World Trade Center, has made the rounds through the Internet crossing borders as well as ideologies. White supremacist groups in the U.S., prone to hate all non-white non-Christians, suddenly find common ground with Moslem anti-Semites in spreading this story. These partnerships of convenience, partnerships of hate present new challenges and dangers.

These alliances of hate were on display at the World Conference Against Racism last August in Durban, South Africa. It was not only that anti-Semites worldwide communicated through the Internet prior to the Conference and worked together at the Conference, but they were also able to benefit from the inaction of human rights groups from around the world gathered at Durban. Just as it was possible to establish conditions to protect human rights, Durban showed how a new "violence of silence"—that it groups supposedly committed to justice who for political or other reasons turn a blind eye to anti-Semitism lend a semblance of legitimacy to haters and anti-Semites.

Similarly, the transmutation of Holocaust denial, that peculiarly western form of anti-Semitism, into a Middle Eastern weapon against the Jews and Israel is one more indicator of this new global anti-Semitism. In the current Middle East atmosphere of hate, the Holocaust is no longer seen by the Arabs as a real event which was used to foist Israel on the Arabs to soothe European guilt, but as a fiction created by Jews to win support for a Jewish state.

Responses to Anti-Semitism and Bigotry The difference between a tolerant and an uncivil society does not lie in the biases within the hearts of its people, but in the public reaction of its leaders to manifestations of hate and bigotry. In our own country, as survivors were still being rescued from ground zero, President Bush issued a strong call against stereotyping and hate against our neighbors who are Arabs, Muslims and Middle Eastern looking. Similarly, the first ad published by the Anti-Defamation League after 9/11 was a call against stereotyping of Muslims urging Americans not to "fight hatred with hatred." ADL has spoken out unequivocally against those extremists who resort to violence, Jews and non-Jews alike.

Sadly, some European leaders have rationalized anti-Jewish attitudes and even violent attacks against Jews as nothing more than a sign of popular frustration with events in the Middle East—something to be expected, even understandable, under the circumstances.

We have seen comparisons made to the imagery and atmosphere in Europe of the 1930s. While some of the imagery is in fact the same, it is clear that the world has changed dramatically since the 1930s. While there are some changes in anti-Semitic attitudes and positive efforts by governments and the Vatican, the most meaningful difference is the existence of mechanisms to combat and deal with manifestations of anti-Semitism in today's world. But as the Durban conference demonstrated, the existence of human rights mechanisms alone is not enough. The utility of these mechanisms will rise or fall on the assertion of responsible moral leadership that bodies like the Congress and the CSCE are uniquely positioned to provide.

We know from our own experience that we cannot police hearts and minds and that bigotry cannot be legislated out of existence. We cannot outlaw hate but we can rally nations around a credo of tolerance. We can promote and reward morally responsible action from government leaders and punish failures.

Mr. Chairman, the CSCE has played a key role in charting a course for combating anti-Semitism over the years—condemning anti-Semitism, 8 years before the UN would even acknowledge anti-Semitism as a form of racism. Now is an important time to reinvigorate the follow up on this agenda among OSCE member states.

1. No Business as Usual. Congress and the CSCE can be a driving force in placing the issue of anti-Semitism squarely on the international diplomatic agenda to be raised by Presidents and cabinet secretaries in all bilateral fora. To give just one example, the League called on participants in UNESCO's 164th Executive Board Session, convening in Paris as we speak, to seize the opportunity to condemn anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere.
2. Convene a "real" conference on anti-Semitism. While it is well established that the UN's World Conference Against Racism served as a forum for anti-Semitism, let the OSCE use its good offices to convene a conference on anti-Semitism to expose its danger and report on the performance of governments in responding. The CSCE has been strong in this regard, and hearings such as this one that you have convened on Capitol Hill are so important. Building on this and other efforts, now would be an important time to follow up with initiatives centered in Europe and to seek ways to replicate this important activity in parliaments of OSCE member nations. The Anti-Defamation League stands ready to be of assistance with such efforts.
3. Anti-Bias Education is an essential building block of combating hatred. Our experience has exposed a broad lack of understanding of what distinguishes legitimate political criticism of Israel from the stereotyping which can foment hatred and anti-Semitism. OSCE is a perfect mechanism through which one could promote educational best practices against intolerance. The ADL currently partners with the European Union and others for Peer Training and other anti-bias education programs. The recent international initiative on Holocaust education provides an interesting model as well.

Mr. Chairman, one of the essential lessons of the Holocaust is that words lead to murder; that the tolerating of bigotry and anti-Semitism can lead to genocide. We never expected in the 21st century, after the world bore witness to the Holocaust that we would have to defend basic notions of freedom and tolerance which we hoped would distinguish this century from the last.

While the last century witnessed the most heinous results of bigotry unchecked, fortunately, we also have witnessed in our lifetime powerful examples of how strong US leadership has brought about dramatic change. When Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretaries of State, and Members of Congress forced issues like religious freedom onto the diplomatic agenda, we witnessed the release of Soviet Refuseniks, the spread of other freedoms across the Former Soviet Union, and, ultimately, the fall of that regime. The US must carry on this tradition—armed with the clear knowledge that we can make a difference.

Anti-Semitism and bigotry, if allowed to flourish, could become one of the most destructive forces unleashed in this new century. History has shown us where this can lead. Durban and other forums showed that this virus is alive and well and that civil society and human rights mechanisms alone are not enough. Combating it right now must not be the task only of non-governmental organizations like the Anti-Defamation League.

America is fighting terrorism by embracing the democratic ideals that our enemies loathe. It is our instinct, our tradition, to fight darkness with light. For the sake of peace and a stable, sane world, we must respond to the silence of Durban, and all the past and future “Durbans” with unequivocal action by responsible governments everywhere.

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