

instrumental in offering his wealth of experience, good humor and knowledge—before, during and after the campaign—was Sebastian Garafalo, of Middletown, Connecticut. Seb was a good friend and a devoted public servant. Sadly, Seb Garafalo died on Wednesday, January 21. He was 71.

To appreciate Seb's political wisdom and his warm personality you need to know that Middletown is a city in which Democrats outnumber Republicans by a margin of 3 to 1. Seb was a Republican, yet he was a former town councilman and a four-term mayor. Seb won his first mayoral race in 1983. He won two more consecutive terms, lost in 1989, and was elected mayor again in 1991. How did he do it? Well, Seb once said, "It's easy, sometimes I vote their way."

Those of us who work in politics know it's much more than that. Seb was first of all a "people person." He liked people and he liked helping them. Second, while Seb was proud to be a Republican he always wanted to do the right thing for his community. Seb put his constituents first and his politics second.

He also served as co-chair of Middletown's 350th anniversary celebration and until July, when his cancer finally slowed him down, he was on the high school building committee.

Seb had a sincere smile, a warm handshake and his goal was always to bring folks together in common purpose. That's as good a definition of public service as I have ever heard. You see, Seb believed in the old adage: From what we get, we make a living; from what we give, we make a life.

The Hartford Courant wrote, in Seb's obituary, "Mr. Garafalo's three decades serving Middletown were marked by his listening to others and leading with his heart."

That tells you a lot about Seb Garafalo; about why he was important to his community and why he will be deeply missed.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL'S NATIONAL DAY TO COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to lend my support for the efforts of our close ally, Israel, in the fight against the scourge of anti-Semitism worldwide. It is fitting and appropriate that Israel has chosen January 27th to raise the issue of anti-Semitism because it marks the day that the Auschwitz death camp was liberated by the Allies. Many of our European friends and allies also held Holocaust remembrance and public education events yesterday.

The painful lesson that the Jewish people learned after World War II was that the logical conclusion of anti-Semitic thought and ideology inevitably leads to anti-Jewish violence. People who are consumed by hatred are almost never content to keep their hatred to themselves. Organized, systematic doctrines of hatred are not just differing opinions. Instead, these anti-Semitic ideologies usually contain an exhortation to action, and that action almost always includes vandalism and violence.

The lesson for the rest of the world is that racial hatred and religious extremism usually starts with the Jews, but if left unchecked, continues to engulf all other peoples and religious views that do not comport with the spewers of hatred. Untold millions of Slavs, Roma, disabled persons, political dissidents, and other so-called "undesireables" marched alongside the Jews into the death camps. They realized all too late, as the saying goes, that first the Nazis came for the Jews, but then they came for them too; no one was left to stand up for their rights. If Europeans and Americans had had more courage to stand up to the fascists and communists who argued that human rights must be subservient to the whims of totalitarian ideologies, perhaps the mass genocides could have been averted.

The painful lessons of World War II are just as relevant today. Even now, we find that the suicide bombers who gleefully hurtle themselves into oblivion in the attempt to kill Israelis and Jewish Americans have been steadily fed a rich diet of anti-Semitism. We have learned that the September 11th bombers emerged from an extremist Wahhabi totalitarian world view in which all those who don't subscribe to their own views are not worthy of human rights, and can be killed at will. Not only that, but the Wahhabi extremists behind 9/11 actually believe that their hatred is divinely justified and required by God.

Regardless of whether my colleagues always agree with the policies of the State of Israel, it is foolish in the extreme to believe that if somehow the United States suddenly abandoned our most loyal ally in the Middle East, that somehow the Wahhabi extremists and Osama Bin Laden supporters would suddenly stop trying to destroy the United States. And yet right after September 11th, there were stories popping up all over Europe and around the world that made the argument that America got its comeuppance that day for its years of staunch support for Israel. This argument is a subtle expression of anti-Semitism in that it implies that support for Israel and the Jews is a crime, and that massacring thousands of innocent civilians can be justified as punishment.

These extremists surely have a systematic doctrine of hatred that starts with hatred of the Jews, but it by no means ends with the Jews. As far as these extremists are concerned, the very values and beliefs America holds dear are blasphemy and punishable by death. I say this because there is a strategic nexus involved here. Israel's fight against anti-Semitism is America's fight against the extremists bent on our own destruction. If we do not join the battle against the rising tide of anti-Semitism both here and abroad, the legacy of that neglect will be a disaster for the U.S. Anti-Semitism is a cancer, and like cancer it will spread until it is either stopped, or it kills you. In a very real sense, anti-Semitism is like the canary in the mine. It alerts you that trouble lies ahead.

I have been actively engaged in the fight against anti-Semitism and have both written and supported legislation designed to expose anti-Semitism. Last summer, I offered an amendment to the State Department Authorization Bill for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 (H.R. 1950) calling on the State Department, the Administration, and the General Account-

ing Office to expand an ongoing investigation and audit of schools run in Palestine by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Incredibly, the U.S. provides one-third of UNRWA's budget even though this agency has failed to take appropriate measures to combat terrorism and fix its broken education system. For instance, UNRWA continues to use anti-Semitic textbooks that glorify martyrdom and deny the legitimacy and existence of Israel as a Jewish state. If children continue to be brainwashed to hate and incited to commit violence in UNRWA schools, then there is no real hope for peace in the region. These UNRWA schools are like greenhouses that are used to grow the next crop of suicide bombers. We must work to change the school curriculum so that it teaches peace and tolerance between Muslims and Jews.

Last summer, I also called for and chaired a Congressional forum after a terrible attack that left 16 people killed and more than 80 wounded after a suicide bomber blew up a Jerusalem city bus during the afternoon rush hour. Ms. Sarri Singer, a New Jersey native, was on the bus and gave moving testimonies at the forum that highlighted the plight of innocent, suffering victims subjected to these awful terrorist attacks.

Unfortunately, anti-Semitic violence and hatred is not limited to the Middle East; in the last year other parts of Europe have also experienced a rise in anti-Semitic acts. In June 2003, I led a State Department delegation, along with former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, to a special conference in Vienna of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The conference addressed the rise in anti-Semitic acts both in Europe and North America, and discussed ways to combat this problem. In addition, both this summer and last, I introduced special resolutions at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly that called upon all 55 member nations to redouble their efforts to combat anti-Semitism in Europe, the United States, and Canada.

After returning from Vienna, H. Con. Res. 49, a resolution I authored to condemn anti-Semitism in Europe and around the world, passed the House on June 25 by a 412-0 vote. H. Con. Res. 49 calls upon lawmakers, law enforcement officials, and educators to amplify their efforts to counter violence and hatred against the Jewish people and their faith. Specifically, the resolution calls upon all nations to aggressively investigate, prosecute, and punish incidents of anti-Semitic violence, discrimination, and destruction of property.

My resolution and the Vienna conference have spurred several nations to act, including Germany, who agreed to host a follow-up conference on anti-Semitism next year in Berlin. The symbolism of this gesture is obvious, as the former center of Nazi Germany will host a conference to address how countries can fight the scourge of anti-Semitism. I will continue to tirelessly push governments and elected officials to speak out against anti-Semitic acts when they occur as well as to vigorously prosecute the perpetrators of these hateful acts. And I am looking forward to attending this follow-on Berlin conference and working to continue the effort to roll back the tide of anti-Semitism.