

Statement & Recommendations of:

**Caryl M. Stern
Senior Associate National Director
Anti-Defamation League**

Before:

**The Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on
European Affairs**

On:

Programs to Counteract Anti-Semitism in Europe

**April 8, 2004
Washington, DC**

Good afternoon. My name is Caryl M. Stern, I am the Senior Associate National Director of the Anti-Defamation League - ADL. For over ninety years, since 1913, the ADL has worked to expose and counter anti-Semitism, as well as all forms of bigotry. I am honored that ADL has been part of this Subcommittee's examination of anti-Semitism in Europe and am pleased to provide an overview of developments and some progress since the Subcommittee examined this issue in a hearing last October.

The focus of my statement today is to lay out for you recommendations for how governments can seize on this progress as an opportunity to put in place programs which can have a meaningful, sustained impact on the ground. I will highlight some recent developments, and some of our hopes for the upcoming OSCE conference on anti-Semitism in Berlin which I am sure my colleagues on the panel will want to address as well.

First let me say that ADL's experience working with this subcommittee, and the Senate at-large on this issue, has been all that we could have hoped for. Chairman Allen, thank you for convening this follow up hearing and for demonstrating that the Committee intends to follow the issue closely and look extensively for measures to stem the growth of this problem. Our requests and ideas have been welcomed and embraced by each of the Senators on this Subcommittee. Allow me also to offer a special thanks to Senator Voinovich, whose commitment to this issue and dogged determination to move beyond speeches or other statements of concern to concrete action, has inspired us all to do our jobs even better.

I stand here before you not only as a representative of the ADL, but also as the author of a book entitled *HATE HURTS: How Children Learn & Unlearn Prejudice* (Scholastic, 1999); as a member of the higher education community of the US both as a

faculty member at numerous institutions and prior to joining the ADL as Dean of Students at Polytechnic University in New York; as a founding member and the first Director of the largest and most wide-reaching anti-bias education project in the world today - the ADL's award-winning A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute - and, as the child of a Holocaust survivor and the grandchild of a passenger on the tragic SS St. Louis. These combined experiences have taught me both the vigor of hatred and the horrors of what it can bring us to, as well as the significant antidote that can only be found through education. Relying on these experiences I would like to offer suggestions on areas where governments, on their own and in partnership with NGOs, can enhance, further implement and promote programs that have already begun to show progress both here in the US and overseas in parts of Europe.

Mr. Chairman, when we deal with the kind of anti-Semitic images and canards that were used in the 1930's, comparisons to pre-WWII Europe are inevitable. In the 1930s we heard a drumbeat of anti-Semitism that began softly and grew. We, the Jews, as well as others, put our fate and our faith in civil institutions - government, law enforcement, organized religion - to protect us before the drumbeat overwhelmed us. Our faith was misplaced. We learned the ultimate lesson about the danger of complacency. Today we are armed with experience and knowledge - today we recognize the warning signs and the indicators. Today - in a very different Europe and with the vital leadership of the United States, we are seeking out the help of these same institutions and hoping for a dramatically different result.

We have seen progress. In the last few months while anti-Semitic incidents have unfortunately continued, there have been hopeful signs:

- The European Union held a conference on anti-Semitism in February at which Romano Prodi, President of the European commission made an important statement: *"I cannot deny, that some criticism of Israel is inspired by what amounts to anti-Semitic sentiments and prejudice. This must be recognized for what it is and properly addressed."*
- In France in 2002, violent anti-Semitic incidents were reported everyday. Members of the community publicly announced that they were unsure whether there was a future for Jews in France. The chief Rabbi advised the community to avoid wearing kipot or other visible Jewish garb as a matter of security. Signs of improvement were evident as President Chirac proclaimed in November that *"when a Jew is attacked in France... It is France as a whole that is under attack,"* and now a new inter-ministerial working group is taking serious measures to tackle the problem.
- In a few short weeks, in Europe, the leaders of 55 nations of the OSCE will convene a Berlin conference on anti-Semitism.

However, even with this progress two major points must not be forgotten:

- While 55 countries will attend and participate in the Berlin OSCE conference, some governments were, frankly, brought along kicking and screaming and many still hope that after Berlin, they will not be forced to talk about the problem again.
- Unlike the model we are used to here at home in the US, countering anti-Semitism in Europe, even monitoring it or condemning it, is still considered controversial.

Appended to my statement you will find a listing of some of the incidents of anti-Semitism that have taken place in the first few months of 2004. It is imperative that we remember that the numbers and statistics that I and others will quote, represent real people, many of them children. Even in France where the overall rate of incidents is not rising, the number of incidents aimed at children is rose in 2003. Each child - each victim, has a name - has a mom or a dad; perhaps a kid brother or sister; possibly a grandparent; all of whom watch and feel the hurt and debasement of being singled out, attacked or harassed for who they are. This common pain - this shared concern for safety and security has led numerous people to pose the age old question of "*Should I leave?*" or more recently "*When should I leave?*"

Allow me to highlight a few major challenges we currently face in fighting anti-Semitism, along with a few of the most promising practices that this subcommittee could promote and move forward:

I. THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING POLITICAL WILL

It sounds strange here in Washington DC in the year 2004 to state that talking about anti-Semitism honestly, especially in Europe, requires the courage to buck the trend of political correctness. However, the "new anti-Semitism" today is gaining acceptability in newspapers, on college campuses, at anti-war rallies and at dinner parties. We are finding it in our classrooms, our board rooms, even in some dining rooms. We are no longer talking about the kind of racially based anti-Semitism that we saw in the last century. That kind of racist mythology is the purview of the extreme right, it is not acceptable to the mainstream, it is simply out of vogue. It is considered repulsive even by some we would consider anti-Semites.

The new anti-Semitism is the type that hides behind statements such as "*I don't have any problem with Jewish people, but I think Sharon is a Nazi, or Israel is a racist or human rights pariah.*" It also shows up in political cartoons that depict age old canards of anti-Semitism in their criticism of Israel. You see some examples of what I'm referring to in just one of our recent reports on anti-Semitism in the Egyptian media appended to my statement.

In today's parlance, evil equals racist, or apartheid or terrorist. And while singling out the Jew as a demon or as racially inferior would not be embraced, the disproportionate denigration, and demonization of Israel as apartheid, colonialist, racist, fascist, or even as a successor to Nazi Germany is downright popular. This is a

pernicious form of critique because it cloaks itself in the credibility of the moral voice of the intellectual elites and the anti-racism or human rights movements.

I am not saying that any criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic. Not at all - in fact I invite you to read any of the Israeli newspapers on-line in English and you will find more open debate and criticism per capital in Israel than almost anywhere else in the world. But there are clear criteria and guidelines for criticism of any sovereign state.

Perhaps former Soviet dissident and current Israeli Minister Natan Sharansky's description of viewing the problem through "3-D glasses" best describes what I am talking about. His three - D's? *DEMONIZATION, DOUBLE STANDARDS, & DELIGITIMIZATION*. *DEMONIZATION* - blowing Israeli actions so out of proportion as to paint Israel as the embodiment of evil. *DOUBLE STANDARDS* - selectively criticizing Israel or failing to put the same focus on similar policies or actions of other states. And, *DELIGITIMIZATION* - a denial of Israel's right to exist or the right of the Jewish people to aspire to live securely in a homeland.

When the Eurobarometer, an European Commission periodic poll, had Europeans rating Israel as the major threat to world peace -- ahead of North Korea, Iraq, and everyone else - we see the clear effect that demonization and double standards can have. When European criticism of Israel is so one-sided and so filled with exaggeration and hyperbole, it reflects a broader bias. While it may not always equal anti-Semitism, it certainly feeds anti-Semitism. It is no accident that the places where Jews feel the most threatened are media markets where the coverage of the Middle East is filled with sensationalized images that are food for incitement.

While most Europeans would not want to admit to harboring bigotry against a Jewish individual, we have reached a point where it seems as if "anything goes" when you are bashing Israel. Two months ago, the British Political Cartoonist annual competition for 2003 awarded first prize for a hideous caricature of Prime Minister Sharon devouring the flesh of a Palestinian baby. Such a cartoon would have been right at home in a 1930 German newspaper. Against this backdrop, politicians and law enforcement officials "understand" that a synagogue arson or violence against elementary school students is "natural" given frustration among Muslim youth over the Middle East conflict. When this happens, it is open season against Jews.

After two years fraught with denial of this problem, we welcomed the beginnings of awareness about the role that this type of anti-Israel activity plays in increasing anti-Semitism. We concur and applaud Romano Prodi's statement that "*This must be recognized for what it is and properly addressed.*" The US can and must continue to play a leadership role in insuring that others follow suit:

- **The US must continue to address the nature and source of the problem squarely.** There has been progress but the problem will grow until European leaders do more to speak out and to counter Middle Eastern sources of anti-Semitism flowing into Europe. US diplomacy has been the vital tool for

promoting and rewarding morally responsible action and to call governments on their shortcomings. This continues to be an uphill battle and continued US leadership is essential.

- **The US must work to secure condemnation of the new anti-semitism in forums like the OSCE, UN, and EU.** Explicit recognition and condemnation is still lacking. Bucking this trend will require US diplomatic muscle. Our EU allies should be much more supportive of US efforts in the UN to pass a resolution condemning anti-Semitism.

II. THE NEED FOR GREATER MONITORING

Considering the challenge of building political will, it is no surprise that there is a lack of appropriate monitoring. It is critical that governments come together to create a common language and process for data collection, as well as appropriate training of those empowered to collect the data. Without this we cannot comprehensively describe the problem nor find mechanisms for correcting it.

The value of monitoring has many layers. The very process of data collection is a powerful mechanism to confront violent bigotry. Increased public awareness of data collection, promotes reporting. Studies have repeatedly shown that victims of hate crimes are more likely to report the crime if they know that a special reporting system is in place. Moreover, the more crimes reported, the better informed the public becomes of the extent of the problem and thus the more demand for a solution and/or a willingness to be part of the solution.

In this particular area, the US has great expertise to lend. The US truly leads in hate crime data collection, as well as in the training of those responsible for it. Far more than mere statistics, the US Hate Crime Statistics Act has increased public awareness of the problem and sparked meaningful improvements in the local response of the criminal justice system to hate violence. Police officials have come to appreciate the law enforcement and community benefits of tracking hate crime and responding to it in a priority fashion. Law enforcement officials can advance police-community relations by demonstrating a commitment to be both tough on hate crime perpetrators and sensitive to the special needs of hate crime victims. By compiling statistics and charting the geographic distribution of these crimes, police officials may be in a position to discern patterns and anticipate an increase in racial tensions in a given jurisdiction.

The violence of the last two years has underscored the need for stronger monitoring as well as highlighting some of the failures of existing mechanisms. The EUMC just released a new report this past week which we welcomed. But it comes a year after another report was held up because of concerns that the results of the survey would anger local immigrant populations who were identified as the perpetrators. Even following the international furor around this controversy, the EUMC felt pressure to sanitize their findings in the new report. The report contained many of the elements we hoped to see but the EUMC press release down played the critical element of the anti-

Semitism in Europe, and led with the conclusion that "...the largest group of the perpetrators of anti-Semitic activities appears to be young, disaffected white European." It called the young Muslims from North Africa "a further source. " And their press office succeeded. Indeed, the resulting headlines in newspapers across the world were that anti-Semitism had increased, and that disaffected white Europeans were responsible. The "new" nature of anti-Semitism, and the changing profile of the perpetrator from exclusively extreme right white males to Muslim immigrant youths was missing.

The US should promote/strongly urge the following:

- **Nations should adopt comprehensive hate crime data collection laws and provide training to appropriate law enforcement professionals in how to identify, report, and respond to hate crimes.**
- **Governments should fund national assessments of hate violence, its causes, the prevalence of the problem in state schools, the characteristics of the offenders and victims, and successful intervention and diversion strategies for juveniles.** There is a direct connection between identifying the nature of the problem and identifying appropriate educational initiatives to address the problem.
- **OSCE Monitoring.** The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights(ODIHR) has been tasked by OSCE ministers with serving as a "collection point" for data on anti-Semitic incidents and other hate crimes. Since so many OSCE participating states have no data collection laws or mechanisms, it is vital that OSCE take a much more proactive approach to encourage states to institute these mechanisms. OSCE could follow up with states and find ways – perhaps through a publication – to put forward a common data collection model and guidelines for law enforcement.
- **Enhance US Reporting.** The efforts of the US to raise international awareness about this problem have been singular in their importance and effectiveness. US reporting on anti-Semitism as a human rights and religious freedom issue is an indispensable tool in spotlighting the problem as well as a tool for diplomacy. As with any reporting which originates in embassies around the world, it varies from place to place. In order to bolster the quality and consistency of reporting on anti-Semitism, Congress should ask the State Department to require explicit reporting on the nature of the problem and assess government responses to it.

III. HOPES FOR SUCCESS AT THE OSCE BERLIN CONFERENCE

Against this backdrop of challenges, we have high hopes that the upcoming OSCE conference in Berlin will be a success. While we are encouraged by the attention and focus of the US and the Secretary of State, we hope Secretary Powell's schedule will allow him to attend to convey the importance we already know he attaches

to this issue - an ingredient we feel will help to insure success. We would define success as having the following components:

- **The meeting must condemn the "new" anti-Semitism in the most accurate, honest way possible.** Given the European atmosphere as I've described it, this is an essential component of success.
- **The meeting must result in concrete action.** We are pleased that the suggestions on format and substance of workshops advanced by the NGOs at this table, as well as by Senator Voinovich, have been incorporated into the conference program. We hope the meeting will end with a concrete program of action by OSCE as an institution and individual participating states.
- **Out of the meeting must come a defined framework for follow up.** While perpetual meetings are not an answer in and of themselves, long term follow up is vital as long as the problem persists. Berlin must be the launch of a follow up mechanism within OSCE. In addition to ensuring that anti-Semitism is on the OSCE annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting agenda, we hope it will spark follow up cooperation among officials with responsibility for key areas such as Interior Ministers, and Education Ministers. By establishing Ministerial work-groups and by defining their challenges and responsibilities, the framework for follow up will exist.

IV. PROMISING PRACTICES

In the spirit of the action-oriented tone of this discussion today, I would like to use my time today to focus on a few of the programs which experience has shown hold out great hope for success in Europe today. I would be pleased to discuss them in more detail if you have questions, and have attached a checklist of ADL programs that have been identified as "promising practices" by governments and NGOs in the fight against racism and xenophobia, as an appendix to this statement. These run the gambit of programs implemented in Germany in response to hate crimes against Turkish Muslim immigrants in the early 1990s to others that address interfaith issues and Holocaust education. The appendix also notes formal evaluation information where available.

Programmatic responses and/or proactive practices must include:

- **Anti-Bias Education.** This is an essential building block of combating hatred. History has shown that, when people of conscience are given tools and skills to recognize and combat bigotry, prejudice and discrimination, they will do so. We know that people are not born to hate - they learn to hate. And, if we learn it, so might we "un-learn it" or prevent the initial learning from taking place to begin

with. Senators should urge parliaments to use schools as a staging ground for Anti-Bias Education. Governments must act now to provide on-going Teacher Training in the use of Anti-Bias Education curricula and methodologies as well as providing opportunities to empower students through Peer Training programs. Research has shown that from the age of 3-5 years-old when children begin to recognize differences and form attitudes based on their perceptions of differences, to the college and university level where intergroup understanding is critical to fostering a successful learning environment, anti-bias education is necessary to equip students with the skills and confidence which enable them to confront prejudice, to become activists against bigotry and to serve as agents for change. Validated by the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education, the ADL A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute has delivered programs to over 450,000 US teachers, training them in how to confront their own biases as well as how to use specially designed curricular materials. Further, this program has been exported to eight European countries, as well as to Argentina, Japan, states of the Former Soviet Union and Israel. The Institute's Peer Training program is currently in use across the US as well as in Austria, Belgium (in French & in Flemish), France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and The United Kingdom.

- **Government sponsored showcases of “promising practices.”** As the populations of European countries become more diverse through immigration, the need to promote tolerance, respect and understanding becomes greater, especially for young people. Governments should host "showcases of Best Practices" of school-based anti-bias education programs, including peer leadership programs, as well as non-school based programs. These will allow for maximum exposure of working methods as well as for exploration of how member countries might adapt these to their specific country culture.
- **Holocaust Education.** As we have all repeatedly acknowledged, crimes against humanity such as the Holocaust, serve as grim reminders of where intolerance can lead if permitted to flourish and of the absolute necessity that it be stopped. Congress should continue to support the work of the International Task Force on Holocaust Education. Parliamentarians should seek to implement Holocaust curricula in public schools to draw upon the lessons of this tragic period to illuminate the importance of moral decision.
- **Working with Religious Institutions.** In the US, ADL's Bearing Witness Program for Religious Educators helps teachers examine anti-Semitism and the Holocaust as a starting point for addressing issues of diversity in contemporary society. Its goal is to successfully implement Holocaust education in religious schools. In order to do this effectively, teachers work to confront and to acknowledge the history of the Holocaust including the role of Churches and other religious institutions. This program is a collaborative effort between ADL, the Archdiocese, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Initially offered only in Washington, DC, the program has now expanded and will be offered in five US cities this summer.

- Law enforcement training.** As so many of countries grapple with their changing demographics, tensions amongst and between various ethnic, racial and religious groups are only further exacerbated by law enforcement professionals who lack strong intergroup skills, cultural understanding, familiarity with the concept of a hate crime, and the skills with which to investigate and/or report on a crime of hate. Beyond training in hate crimes response and investigation, anti-bias education for law enforcement professionals helps develop cross cultural skills and communication in order to enhance officer effectiveness and safety by building cooperation and trust with diverse communities. Institutions like the OSCE's Law Enforcement Training arm, EU Law Enforcement Training Centers and the US FBI training academy in Budapest provide opportunities for such training programs. The FBI Law Enforcement Training Academy in Budapest should institute an anti-bias training component as well as hate crime identification, investigation and monitoring training programs. An institution like the OSCE law enforcement arm is well poised to issue publications describing the nature of anti-Semitism today with the goal of helping governments and law enforcement agencies know it when they see it. In Austria, ADL has been contracted to provide such training ultimately to every law enforcement professional in the entire country. Relying on a turn-key model, under the direction of the minister of the Interior, training has been implemented already for 8% of all law enforcement professionals throughout Austria. In Russia, ADL has provided training as part of the "Climate of Trust" hate crime training program for law enforcement.
- Responding to Racism and Hate Crimes in the Armed Forces.** Ministries of Defense should provide anti-bias and prejudice awareness training for all recruits and military personnel, improve procedures for screening out racist recruits, and clarify and publicize existing prohibitions against active duty participation in hate group activity.
- Replicate Similar Action in other Parliaments.** So many important initiatives against anti-Semitism have originated in hearings like this and are advanced by Members of Congress moved by their convictions to take action. The challenge is how to replicate this activity abroad. Let other parliaments do as Congress has done, convene hearings like this one, pass resolutions against anti-Semitism, set up caucuses like the Helsinki Commission or the Congressional Task Force Against Anti-Semitism in the House and develop national action plans to combat it.

CONCLUSION

The last few years of dealing with the new anti-Semitism has posed the painful question, how far have we come, have we learned the lessons of the Holocaust? The answer is certainly a work in progress. It is being written in hearing rooms like this, and in the hearts and minds of all who were touched by it.

When reports of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia first emerged ADL ran ads with a simple understated message - respond as you wish the world had responded . . . the meaning was clear. We never thought we would be saying the same with respect to anti-Semitism in Europe. Now we are asking, respond as you wish the world had responded the last time. You, the Senate, the US, have answered the call admirably.

We hope that your work, your commitment, and initiatives like those I've outlined will command the day. We hope the answer will be dramatically different than it was the last century.