

was in sight, devoted followers professed their determination to continue.

A Nazi-controlled newspaper said at the time:

The heart which beat only for us, the will which blazed only for us, the creative genius which thought and acted only for us, the voice which so often galvanized us—all this no longer exists! However low fate has brought events, Hitler's achievements will illuminate, far into the distant future, the epoch which began with him.

Now, 50 years later, these words offer an ominous warning. Modern-day paranoia, built upon elaborate conspiracy theories and fears, I am sorry to say, is still very much alive today.

For several years, we have seen an escalation in fundamentalist-inspired killings in Egypt and Algeria, the rise of neo-Nazism in Germany, nationalistic fervor in former Communist States, severe anti-immigrant backlash in France, and poison gas attacks in Japan.

The rise of fanaticism and the terrorism it spawns is ever increasing right here in the United States as well.

I think no event embodies this more than the Oklahoma City bombing.

Whatever the final outcome of the investigation into the bombing, a new—and, I believe eye-opening—look at the growing trend of extremism is taking place across the world.

In this country, so-called militias are growing in numbers, stockpiling vast arsenals, preaching hate and violence against this Government.

Here are some examples:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has orders for Hispanics and African-Americans to be "rounded up and detained" in the event of a State of domestic national emergency.

That is false.

They say tax protesters, demonstrators against Government military intervention outside United States borders, and people who maintain weapons in their homes are the next targets.

That is false.

They say that FEMA advocates "the rounding up and transfer to 'assembly centers or relocation camps' of at least 21 million American Negroes."

That is false.

They say there are black helicopters with no markings spying on citizens. They say police officers were met by "armed men in black uniforms," reportedly from the Federal Government.

That is false.

They say U.N. troops are training to suppress America's people.

That is false.

They say Somalia was simply a practice run for occupying the United States.

That is false.

They point out that Russian trucks and personnel carriers are being imported as well as "100-car trains filled with United Nations equipment."

That is false.

They even say that Crips and Bloods—gangs that dominate some urban areas—are being trained to serve

as something called "shock troops" and "cannon fodder" for house-to-house searches conducted by "New World Order officers."

That is false.

So theories about black helicopters, modern day concentration camps, and mass raids abound, we find, throughout this land of the free and home of the brave. Even on Internet, this system is used to spread conspiracy theories across our land. Even a terrorist handbook is run on the Internet on how to build a bomb. I read this handbook, and they tell you how to break into university chemical labs, how to find the chemicals you need, and how to steal those chemicals.

Finally, we see neo-Nazism, even signs popping up here and there saying "whites only," and on and on and on.

One must ask the question on this very special day: Will the threats, the fear mongering, and the paranoia eventually fuel major bloodshed? Was it responsible for encouraging the terrible Oklahoma City bombing?

Two years ago, militia members warned about U.N. troops poised along the United States-Canadian border, ready for invasion. Thirty years ago, the John Birch Society warned of Chinese troops in box cars along the Mexican border. Fifty years ago, the most deadly of all wars ended.

History can teach us lessons if we want to learn. Or we can be doomed to repeat history time and time again.

We all pray that the Oklahoma City bombing is a one-time-only event.

Yet, as a country, this is a time for us to come together, to heal, to begin anew, to straighten with truth vicious lies, to look for what unites us and strengthens us as a people, an American people, to strengthen these bonds, rather than to seek what divides us.

The wounds of the past can guide us in the future. We simply need the determination and the political will to fight the fear and the paranoia that is still so strong in our society.

V-E Day is a chance to celebrate the conclusion of one of the darkest eras in our history. It is a chance to say thank you to those who gave their lives so that we might remain a free people.

Let us use this day to also look deeply at America as it exists today. There is a great deal of work to do to sort it out, to pull this country together before fear and intolerance rips us apart.

It is with the loving memory of the millions and millions of victims of World War II—and the hundreds of victims of the Oklahoma bombing—that I make these remarks today. And I give thanks to those who fought and died in Europe so that we may know freedom.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. GRAMS], is recognized.

PRODUCT LIABILITY

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, for the last 2 weeks we have had a serious debate over our Nation's broken liability system.

We have heard stores from supporters of the plaintiff's bar who claim that manufacturers are putting products on the market with little regard for consumer safety.

And we have also heard from supporters of manufacturers who have anecdotes of honest individuals who were sued for multimillion-dollar awards and settled out of court to avoid more costly legal fees, even when they were innocent.

Later today or tomorrow, there will be an effort by supporters of product liability reform to end debate, but before we do that, I wanted to make sure this body heard comments from a few of my constituents.

An all-too-familiar story from America's small businesses is exemplified in a letter from Trade Mart Furniture's Jerry Johnson, a constituent from Rochester, MN.

Jerry writes:

I've experienced firsthand the effects of a frivolous lawsuit. After two years of court appearances, legal fees and countless hours, I won. It cost almost \$10,000 to defend myself. I thought the legal system was created to protect the citizen, not the profiteer.

Ann Hartman of Hartman Tree Farms in Victoria, MN, states, "I am tired of seeing lawyers make so much money off the tragedies of others."

And a couple from Menahga, MN, who own Burkel Turkey Farms writes:

The system now is a free-for-all for the money-hungry and the lawyers. There are far too many people out there that feel the system owes them something.

We are at the mercy of dishonest people who are only out for a buck. It's different if a person has a legitimate claim, but something must be done to maintain a fair legal system for the honest people of this world.

Mr. President, these are just a few of the comments I have received throughout my tenure as a representative from Minnesota, and as a small businessman myself, I understand the effects of the threat of a potential lawsuit.

The fact is that almost 90 percent of all U.S. companies can expect to be named in a product liability lawsuit. The present liability system costs Americans \$300 billion a year and like most Americans, my Minnesota constituents are concerned about the devastating effects the liability system has on them.

Recent polls continue to show strong support for liability reform: 83 percent believe the present liability system has problems and should be improved, while 89 percent believe that "too many lawsuits are being filed in America today."

Our current system benefits the lawyers and the dishonest. It treats both plaintiffs and defendants unfairly. Inconsistent laws force both sides to sacrifice time and money on unpredictable

litigation. Both consumers and manufacturers end up losers. Consumers lose because they receive inadequate compensation. Some estimates have shown that our tort system consumes 57 cents of every \$1 awarded in lawsuits.

In addition, consumers wait unreasonable amounts of time before they receive compensation, and often pay outrageous fees to their attorneys.

Manufacturers lose because liability concerns stifle research and development.

A recent survey showed that because of fear of litigation, 47 percent of companies had withdrawn products from the market; 25 percent had discontinued some kind of research; and 8 percent actually had laid off workers.

In fact in 1 year alone, Texas lost 79,000 jobs due to the cost of the liability system.

Each year there are more than 70,000 product liability lawsuits filed in the United States—yet Great Britain only has an average of 200.

Now, this is only one of the reasons liability insurance costs are 20 times higher in the United States than in Europe.

As a result of this well-known liability gold-rush, the United States as a nation loses as well.

According to the Product Liability Coordinating Committee, the cost of product liability ranges from \$80 to \$120 billion per year.

These costs are passed directly on to you and me as consumers. Appropriately, this is known as the tort tax.

For example, manufacturers of football helmets add \$100 to the cost of a \$200 helmet. Auto manufacturers add \$500 to the price of a new car, and the markers of a \$100 stepladder will add another \$20 to its cost, just to cover potential liability.

I know many of my colleagues have mentioned this, but I want to reiterate the fact that right here in Washington, DC, the Girl Scout Council must sell 87,000 boxes of Girl Scout cookies each year just to cover the cost of their liability insurance.

In my own State of Minnesota, Attorney General Hubert Humphrey III, the son of Minnesota's great U.S. Senator, recently testified before the State legislature that his office spent \$340,000 in 1994 defending Minnesota against frivolous lawsuits. Attorney General Humphrey offered a top-10 list of lawsuits from Minnesota inmates. These are just a few of the ridiculous claims that prisoners have filed:

One prisoner claimed he had a constitutional right to a computer in his jail cell. One claimed that the President gave him a fungus.

Another prisoner claimed underwear was not provided, and when it was provided, it was so tight that it constituted cruel and unusual punishment.

If you think these lawsuits are laughable, try Mr. Humphrey's No. 1 frivolous lawsuit: One prisoner claimed that his primary reason for filing a lawsuit was "pure delight in spending tax-

payers' money." I understand that suits like these may be rare. However, they typify the problems with our current system.

The Gorton-Rockefeller Product Liability Fairness Act will address many of the problems faced by well-intentioned, honest manufacturers.

This legislation will establish alternative dispute resolution, extend protection to product sellers, provide an absolute defense for injuries received when the plaintiff was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and prevent automobile rental companies from being held liable for damages caused by the renters of its cars when the company is not at fault.

In addition, the Gorton-Rockefeller bill will provide much-needed relief to suppliers of biomaterials. Currently, raw material suppliers who have no direct role in the raw material's ultimate use as a biomaterial share extraordinary and irrational liability risk with device manufacturers.

Companies such as DuPont, Dow Chemical, and Dow Corning have decided to stop supplying manufacturers of medical devices with raw materials for fear of lawsuits. This legislation is progress, and is the first step in the right direction.

While I am encouraged by the hard work of the Senators from Washington State and West Virginia, I am concerned that we may be opening up a new can of worms, when this legislation is signed into law.

While it will offer protection for product manufacturers, my fear is that it will leave the service industry as the only remaining deep pocket.

I believe the Senate should continue moving forward to reform our liability system, making sure that individuals who deserve compensation are made whole and that individuals who are not at fault are not held liable for someone else's actions.

Mr. President, we should take this historic opportunity today to approve the Product Liability Fairness Act, and in doing so ensure that our liability system is fair to all parties involved, not just those who are looking for their golden nugget in the liability gold-rush.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until the hour of 12:10.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Hearing no objection, so ordered.

NEI ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues an advertisement currently getting wide circulation by the nuclear power industry.

This advertisement touts the virtues of legislation introduced for the nu-

clear power industry to address the industry's nuclear waste problem.

As many of my colleagues are aware, the industry's solution to its waste problem has, for a number of years, been very simple: ship the waste to Nevada.

Since 1982, Nevada has been the target of the nuclear powder industry's efforts to move its toxic high-level waste away from reactor sites.

Under current law, Yucca Mountain, 90 miles north of Las Vegas, is being studied, supposedly to determine its suitability as a site for a permanent geologic repository.

The repository program has had immense problems.

With \$4.5 billion spent to date on the program, Yucca Mountain is no closer to accepting the nuclear power industry's waste than it was 13 years ago, when Congress passed the first Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

I am not alone in my opinion that a repository will never be built at Yucca Mountain.

The nuclear power industry is also frustrated.

In a curious juxtaposition from the Nevada perspective, the industry thinks the DOE is being too careful, paying too much attention to environmental concerns, and simply not moving fast enough.

While the nuclear power industry still maintains that Nevada is perfectly suitable to host their repository, it has come to the conclusion that Yucca Mountain will never solve its high-level waste problem.

The nuclear power industry has a new solution, and of course, Nevada is once again the victim.

The nuclear power industry's new strategy is to designate Nevada as the site for its interim storage, beginning in 1998.

While the "interim" designation is supposed to imply a temporary facility, the nuclear power industry defines "interim" as 100 years, subject to renewal.

The motive is patently transparent: ship high level nuclear waste to Nevada as soon as possible, without any regard for the health and safety of Nevadans, and then forget about it.

The type of public relations campaign being mounted here is nothing new.

While we in Nevada have long experience with such campaigns by the nuclear power industry and its hired flacks, I have to admit that this latest advertisement is a masterpiece of deception and misinformation.

The headline alone reveals the deceptiveness of the advertisement.

"There are 109 good reasons to store nuclear waste in 1 place" proclaims the nuclear industry's advertisement.

The headline appeals to the logic of the reader—of course, the reader thinks, 1 site is better than 109.

The problem is, of course, that the advertisement does not tell the true story.