

May 21, 2004

The Honorable Tom Daschle
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Daschle:

I am deeply troubled by recent anti-Semitic remarks made by Senator Fritz Hollings and the trend of insensitive rhetoric emanating from Democratic elected officials and Democratic organizations. Senator Hollings' opinion piece that ran in newspapers in South Carolina stated that American Jews were the reason, as stated in the title, "Why We're in Iraq." His insensitive statements in this piece ranged from subtle to overt anti-Semitism.

In choosing to attack Jews, Senator Hollings listed the names of prominent Jews who support President Bush's Middle East policy. What he failed to mention was that the philosophy expressed by the men he listed is also a widely supported policy championed by Americans -- Jews and non-Jews like. To be critical of the Administration is one thing, but to single-out Jews as being wholly responsible for and having undue influence on the Administration's Iraq policy can only be regarded as anti-Semitic.

This is certainly not the first time Senator Hollings has made malicious remarks about Jews. In 2002, he went so far as to make the outrageous comparison of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to Saddam Hussein. To compare Sharon, the leader of the only democracy in the Middle East to Hussein, is ludicrous at best.

Senator Hollings' anti-Semitic remarks are representative of a troubling trend within the Democratic Party. Congressman Jim Moran made identical anti-Semitic statements last year, blaming Jews for the trouble in the Middle East. In Congressman Moran's instance, the Minority Whip rightfully stripped Congressman Moran of his leadership position in the House, which makes your silence all the more deafening.

In addition, it is astonishing that you have remained silent as Senator John Kerry announced that Al Sharpton would play a major national role this summer as a voice for your party. Sharpton is widely known for his past anti-Semitic statements, and the fact that Senator Kerry would associate himself with someone as insensitive to American Jews is of deep concern.

As a national figure and a leader of your party, you have a responsibility to the American people to end your silence by loudly and clearly rejecting these bigoted remarks. I also hope you have the courage to speak out to other Democrat party officials and candidates to do the same.

Sincerely,

/s/

ERIC CANTOR
Member of Congress

Cc: Hon. Nancy Pelosi