

# Canada moves ‘to turn back the culture of terrorism’

On April 19, 1995, the day Timothy McVeigh blew up the Alfred B. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City killing 168 people, the Internet had only one known hate sight, *storefront.net*.

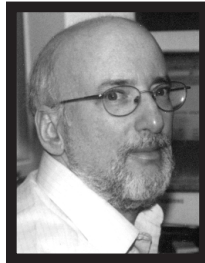
Today, according to Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, there are over 6,000 terror and hate sites on the web, an increase of 20 per cent from last year.

Rabbi Cooper was recently in Ottawa to release the Simon Wiesenthal Center annual CD-ROM report, *Digital Terrorism & Hate 2006*. While here, the rabbi met with Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay, Justice Minister Vic Toews and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day.

“It is not so much the numbers anymore. The deepest concern we have is the fact that international terrorists now see the Internet as a core proponent on how they operate,” Cooper notes.

The examples from the CD the rabbi highlighted at the press conference make that abundantly clear.

There are manuals that teach you how to make dirty bombs and chemical or biological weapons, to plan and execute a suicide attack, to train for Jihad and how to avoid detection by using multiple download sites. There is also information on global positioning devices.



**Editor**

**Barry Fishman**

Internet sites are used also by terrorists for propaganda purposes – such as a video of suicide terrorists blowing up a hotel in Baghdad – and for fundraising and recruitment of new members for Jihad and suicide missions.

Canada is given high marks for how it deals with hate material on the Internet and should be a role model for the rest of the world, Rabbi Cooper believes.

“The rules in place in this democracy, I think, are healthy rules that generally work [with] its partner, the Internet Provider Association. There are no thought police, no prior restraint; people can put up any website they want. If they cross the line, make a phone call or send an e-mail to your Internet provider.”

The proactive approach by Internet providers means hate material on Canadian websites is quickly removed. Unfortunately, the hatemongers have caught on to this and many of their websites are hosted in other countries.



**Rabbi Abraham Cooper**

In a telephone interview following his visit with members of the new Conservative cabinet, Rabbi Cooper told the *Bulletin* he was impressed with the government’s response to the report.

“Despite the fact that you have a new government in place, there is a clear understanding the Internet plays a role and is a factor in so many of the issues they are responsible for. They responded very positive and appropriately.”

He notes a number of bureaucrats responsible for these files attended the press conference and picked up the CD-ROM.

During his visit, Rabbi Cooper spent a

lot of time talking to the politicians and bureaucrats about suicide bombings. He would like Canada’s help in pushing for a law internationally that would make suicide bombing a crime against humanity.

He is optimistic, noting how quickly the new Conservative government announced its refusal to deal with Hamas and, unlike the previous Liberal government, it listed the Tamil Tigers as a terrorist organization.

“I think that already there is a clear indication that Canada is going to be, in some ways, in the forefront of the international effort to turn back the culture of terrorism. ... I am more optimistic, not just because of the body language of meetings, but also, already, in just a few short weeks, the Hamas move, the Tamil [Tigers] move. It is a government that promised to take action and is much more quickly focused than we have seen in a long time.”

The rabbi is fond of saying, “We don’t need Canada to be Switzerland. We need Canada to be Canada.”

What he means is he would like to see Canada take a leadership role on the international stage when it comes to combatting the scourge of terrorism.

If the Conservative government’s recent pronouncements are any indication, he may just get his wish.