

## WORLD

# 'Humanity went berserk'

A survivor of the Holocaust urges Canadian teens to continue the fight against intolerance and hatred, writes **SHELDON ALBERTS** in Washington.

In the six decades since Philip Weiss was liberated from a Nazi concentration camp in Mauthausen, Austria, the 82-year-old Holocaust survivor has often been torn between the urge to tell his story and a feeling that "numbing silence" was the better response to the horrors he witnessed.

Mr. Weiss chose to speak out, forcefully, because he could not allow his history to be denied by the likes of Ernst Zundel, Jim Keegstra and, more recently on the world stage, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"I was there. My mother lost 36 members of her family," Mr. Weiss said yesterday. "I saw the Nazis murdering children and sick people, young and old. I am a witness to that. What makes me speak out? That makes me speak out. You can't let people denigrate that."

With often harrowing detail, Mr. Weiss recounted his suffering and survival before an audience of 250 Canadian students who were in Washington yesterday as part of the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program.

Still emotionally drained from visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Canadian teens heard Mr. Weiss tell of being imprisoned in five concentration camps before American troops freed him in May 1945.

He described seeing thousands of people "transported in cattle wagons to the

slaughterhouse" and "murdered with assembly-line efficiency" simply because they were Jews.

"Humanity went berserk," said Mr. Weiss, who was born in Drohobycz, Poland, and now lives in Winnipeg.

Millions in Europe were "silent bystanders" while the Nazis carried out their extermination program.

That the Holocaust could happen in 20th-century Germany should be proof that genocide can happen anywhere, said Mr. Weiss, who has been a Holocaust educator since 1978. The responsibility of today's youth is to sound the alarm when they see intolerance and hatred, whether in their own communities or around the world, he said.

"That is what you are being asked today to help us with. We (survivors) won't be here for much longer. You cannot, and you must not, be silent observers," he told the students during a speech at the Canadian Embassy.

"We always say the Holocaust should never happen again. But many things comparable to it are happening," said Adam Sadinsky, 15, a Grade 9 student at Yitzhak Rabin High School in Ottawa.

"It is our obligation to stop this, to stop the injustice of human rights violations."

The students were equally moved by the exhibits at the Holocaust museum, where the story of six million victims is told in artifacts from the death camps, in personal items of the dead, and the words of survivors.

"It was just so emotionally overwhelming. My heart sank," said Atara Messinger, 15, who also attends Yitzhak Rabin High School.

"To think how the world just sat back and let it happen and only intervened when it was too late, I think it is our obligation, as the generation now, to remember."

### UNITED STATES

## Well-known Texas senator dies

Former senator and treasury secretary Lloyd Bentsen, the country's Texan who famously put down vice-presidential rival Dan Quayle in a 1980 debate by telling him "you're no Jack Kennedy," died yesterday. He was 85. Mr. Bentsen, who represented the state in Congress for 28 years, died at his Houston home, his family said.

### ROMANIA

## Dracula Castle to be handed over

tourist sites, the fabled Dracula Castle, to its former owner, the culture minister said yesterday. The castle, worth an estimated \$25 million U.S., will be transferred on Friday to Dominic van Hapsburg, a New York architect who inherited the castle decades after the communists seized it, a government official said.

### NETHERLANDS

## Suspect freed in Holloway case

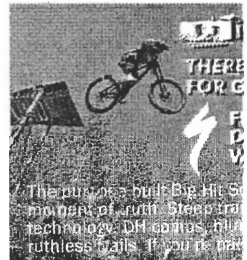
The latest lead in the disappearance of Natalie Holloway evaporated yesterday when police in Amsterdam released a man identified by witnesses as having deep scratches on his face shortly



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