



Antisemitism on Campus:

The Virus that Continues to Spread

January 2019

Opening Thoughts

In America, Jews feel very comfortable, but there are islands of anti-Semitism - the American college campus.

-Natan Sharansky in U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Campus Anti-Semitism (2005)

Introduction

Anti-Semitism is rapidly becoming the norm on the campuses of institutions of higher learning. Jewish students are being targeted, harassed, and physically threatened in blatantly inequitable ways. Anti-Semitism on Canadian campuses is not a new phenom. From the late 1920s until the Second World War, several Canadian universities enforced discriminatory measures against Jewish students. For many immigrants who arrived from Eastern Europe at the start of the century, education represented the best prospect for social mobility which was reflected in a significant increase in Jewish enrollment. (Abella, 1983) (Antcil, 1992)

In Montreal, McGill university administrator, Sir Arthur Currie, was concerned that a substantial and ever-increasing Jewish presence would prevent Anglo-Saxon Protestant students from receiving an adequate education. Strict quotas were implemented by faculties, limiting Jewish enrollment to a small percentage of all students. Harvard and Columbia universities in the United States were among several that had previously implemented similar measures. Most of these discriminatory policies were not lifted until after the Second World War, despite pressure from influential individuals. Discriminatory policies regarding Jews divulged the reality of anti-Semitic biases being prevalent. (Abella, 1983) (Beauchemin, n.d.)

The massacre in Pittsburgh is a harsh reminder that prejudice is still with us – but it's also worth noting the signs that Canada's attitudes truly have changed over the generations.

The global explosion of antisemitism and anti-Israel activity continues to grow with increasing intensity and violence. The 2017 Hate Crime in Canada report produced by Statistics Canada disclosed that Jews continue to be the most targeted minority group in Canada as the number of reports continue to increase (Benlolo, 2017).

Incidents of anti-Semitism have been on the rise for a fifth straight year in Canada. Canada has seen an upsurge of anti-Semitism in all forms including: online, public protests, politics, on university campuses and unabashed public assaults. Anti-Semitic incidents and attacks spanned the political spectrum, ranging

from the far-right to the far-left, with significant contributions from Islamic and Arab nationalists as well. (Remiorz, 2018)

Acts of anti-Semitism have played out on the campuses of Canadian universities and colleges. Where to draw that line on university campuses is something administrators are struggling with today, but only after having allowed free speech to promote hate against one group — Jewish people — on campus for years. (Benlolo, Campuses allowed anti-Semitism to fester. Now they're paying the price, 2017)

Since the Charlottesville Unite the Right rally and the deadly shooting incident at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, college and university campuses have been plagued by a surge in physical displays and acts of anti-Semitism. Canadian campuses are not immune. Prejudicial exhibitions have plagued college campuses, following a trend of anti-Semitism on the rise at colleges and universities since 2016. Advocacy groups consider the recent spate of bigotry a reflection of the political mood du jour. Weak responses from college leaders embolden perpetrators of hate crimes. The general response to these incidents has been to condemn them, and in some instances, hold assemblies to support students who feel besieged, though this has dissatisfied some who wanted their universities to be educating students on anti-Semitism more actively. Some administrators and pro-active student groups alike feel that they're not going to prevent these incidents from occurring completely, but what can be done is to exploit them as an opportunity to educate and inform. (Bauer-Wolf, 2018)

Students tend to feel frustrated over prejudice when they don't feel heard, particularly on large university or college campuses. Students apprehensive of possible repercussions of coming forward with concerns and fears. Administrators need to be clear in identifying the intent behind incidents.

Anti-Semitism is a pervasive problem. Administrators at Canadian colleges and universities need to act accordingly. If they are not calling out anti-Semitism, when anti-Semitism, anti-Zionist or anti-Jewish animus is clear, they are then minimizing the rippling effect the occurrence has on the Jewish community at-large.

Now is the time for college administrators to confront their hypocrisy, stop protecting hate speech and bigoted behavior directed against Jewish students, and take it as seriously as they do bias against African-Americans, women, and the LGBTQ community. Jewish students must insist on a safe and welcoming learning environment, just as other minorities do. Given the burgeoning anti-Semitism on campus, Jewish students need to take a stand, now more than ever. (Dahl, 2019)

Incidents on Canadian Campuses

- In September 2017, at St. Thomas University, a predominantly Catholic liberal arts university located in Fredericton, New Brunswick, three signs directing people to white supremacist websites were found posted on a Maliseet language welcome sign amidst a conference on reconciliation with

the Indigenous community. The signs included the slogans “Equality is a false god” and “Critical thought is a crime”. One sign depicted a white man and woman with the words “We have a right to exist”. (Gill J. , 2017)

- In September 2017, swastikas defaced signs and placards at University of Toronto campuses
- In September 2017, at Laval University in the greater Montreal-area, recruitment posters depicting slogans like “defend your identity” and “defend your freedoms” from alt-right group Generation Identity, were discovered. (Noel, 2017)
- In the same month, posters from far-right group Atalante were found on campus at Laval University September 2017 – The posters read “the left stifles the debate! No cultural Marxism in our schools”. (Bouchard, 2017)
- In October 2017 at University of New Brunswick, the same posters which appeared at St. Thomas University were found on campus. The leaflets depicted a young white man and woman predominantly displayed with the slogan- “We Have a Right to Exist”. (Gill J. , 2017)
- In October 2017, Ottawa’s Carleton University discovered the presence of anti-immigration posters from group, Generation Identity. (Librach, 2017)
- In October 2017 on the campuses of Montreal’s McGill University posters from Generation Identity were discovered. The prints advertised a book entitled “Canada in Decay” encouraging anti-immigration sentiments; the subtitle referenced the “ethnocide of Euro-Canadians”. (McCready, 2017)
- In November 2017, “*It’s okay to be white*” posters were found on multiple campuses across the country in November 2017 including Toronto’s University of Toronto St George Campus, University of Waterloo, University of Alberta, University of Calgary, University of Saskatoon, and University of Regina. The well-organized campaign was prearranged online via the website 4chan as a “proof of concept” that a “harmless message” would cause outrage in the media. Similar posters and campaigns were also found on university campuses across the United States, New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. (Khandaker, 2017) The slogan “It’s ok to be white” neatly encapsulates the imaginary universe of “reverse racism”, wherein critiques of white supremacy and structural racism are turned inside out, and used as evidence of anti-white racism. It captures the mindset that accuses those opposed to racism of being, themselves, racist. The second problem the memers faced was that after originating in the bowels of chan culture, the plan was immediately adopted and promoted by prominent neo-Nazis and Klansmen. It was promoted by what may be the world’s most prominent neo-Nazi website, the Daily Stormer. Then, former KKK grand wizard David Duke claimed the

campaign was “sweeping the nation”. It became the basis for further action by open white nationalists. (Wilson, 2018)

- In November 2017, at British Columbia’s University of Victoria, posters with slogans like “(((Those))) who hate us will not replace us” were found. The triple parentheses are used online by neo-Nazis to identify Jews. The slogan “Jews will not replace us” was chanted during the Charlottesville rally. (Mooney, 2017)
- In November 2017, on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, a chalk drawing was found in the University of British Columbia forestry building. The graffiti read "Heil Hitler”.

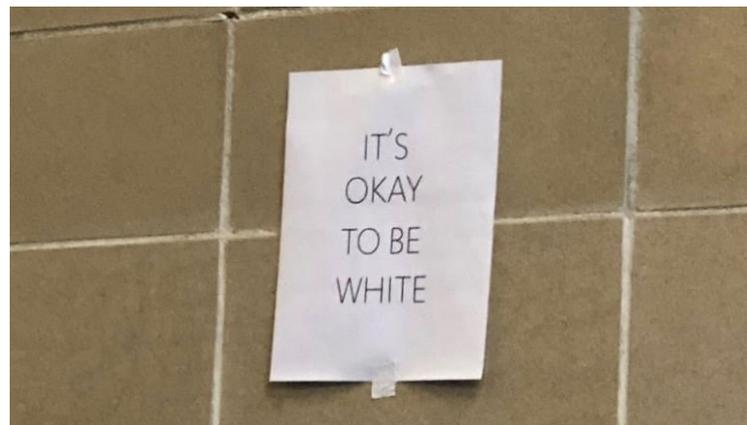


- In January 2018, White nationalist ‘ID Canada’ posters were found in the vicinity of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The posters included slogans like: “Stop the ethnocide of old-stock Canadians” and “Defend your freedom” and “Defend your identity.” (O’Brien, 2018)
- On January 16, 2018 on the campuses of the University of New Brunswick, brochures depicting the marginalization of indigenous peoples were discovered. (Sturgeon, 2018) The student newspaper published an interview with National Socialist Canadian Labour Revival Party (NSCLRP) President, Michael Thurlow, a Nazi sympathizer, who claimed white supremacy was a mythical diatribe invented by Jews. Thurlow and his supporters disseminated anti-Semitic and anti-Indigenous rhetoric. (Press, 2018)
- In February 2018, graffiti depicting a swastika was found in an elevator of a residence at the University of Western Ontario.
- In February 2018, vehemently anti-Semitic articles were posted on the Facebook pages of two student groups at the University of British Columbia.

- On February 28, 2018 University of Winnipeg officials stated that antisemitic statements were made at a faculty-sponsored discussion titled, “My Jerusalem: Responding to the US Embassy Announcement,”. The event was organized by Independent Jewish Voices-Winnipeg, the Canadian Arab Association of Manitoba, United Jewish Peoples Order-Winnipeg and others, and was co-sponsored by Global College, a subdivision of the university. The stated goal of the event was to discuss the Jewish, Christian and Muslim reactions to the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Although the allegedly anti-Semitic comments were not specified, reports indicate that they violated a working definition of anti-Semitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. That definition, adopted by Canada but considered controversial by many critics of Israel, includes certain forms of one-sided criticism of Israel as examples of antisemitism. (JTA, 2018)



- On October 31, 2018 the campus of the University of Manitoba was peppered by posters whose slogans read “It’s ok to be white”. Faxes with the same phrase were sent to offices around the campus, including the women's and gender studies program. The University of Manitoba denounced the posters, which the school president David Barnard stated are part of a co-ordinated international effort by neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups. He went on to state that "the university unequivocally condemns this and any other racist actions...There is no tolerance for hate and discrimination, as I made clear yesterday in my remarks at the vigil in honour of the shooting victims in Pittsburgh: We share a sense of revulsion and need to act because of what we see happening around us. The treatment of refugees. The tone of anger and hatred in political discourse. The installation of corrupt regimes. A distressing number of hate crimes. Terrorist attacks." (CBC, 2018)



- On November 1, 2018 on the campuses of Ottawa’s Carleton University, the same posters as were found on the walls of University of Manitoba, bearing the slogan “It’s ok to be white” appeared. The same posters were found splattered across the downtown corridor. (Boyce, 2018) The signs reportedly stemmed from an anonymous post in a thread on message board 4chan¹ and its sister site, 8chan- as part of a far-right political project calling on people to print them out and post them to expose anti-white bias and convert “normies” to the far-right cause. Always a home for trolls, over time certain boards on 4chan and its cousin 8chan have become nerve centres for far-right activism. The notion cooked up by one of the site’s anonymous users was that a poster campaign featuring the ostensibly inoffensive slogan would “trigger” leftists and journalists, who would immediately understand its racist intent. The slogan has been used by white supremacists for decades, and it was immediately identifiable as a racist meme. White power bands were using it for song titles as far back as 2001, and it was appearing on white supremacist fliers as long ago as 2005. That’s no surprise – “It’s ok to be white” perfectly expresses the sense of white victimhood that pervades white supremacist movements that see any demand for racial justice as an attack on

¹ 4chan is an English-language imageboard website. Users generally post anonymously, with the most recent posts appearing above the rest. 4chan is split into various boards with their own specific content and guidelines

white identity. (Wilson, 2018) The posted signs were innocuous, just text without images or symbols, sending a disturbing message to communities who've been targeted by the extreme right. (Gillis, 2018)

Additionally, with regards to 'It's ok the be white' - Meaning is never produced in a vacuum. Statements have historical and cultural contexts and ideology is embedded in the language used. Written texts can produce meaning, using rhetorical devices, like metaphor and irony. Things start getting complicated when we mix up the cultural meanings of things for the literal meanings. When this happens, a statement that is filled with cultural, historical and contextual biases appears natural and ahistorical. "It's okay to be white," appears to be a literal, or denotative, message, but when we read it in context — against the backdrop of institutionalized racism and discrimination, we see it is far from benign. The slogan on the poster indicates a belief that white identities are no longer accepted at the university. A seemingly double standard exists in conversations of cultural diversity. This attitude is aligned with the alt-right, a U.S.-based white nationalist movement. (2018)

Miscellaneous Events and Incidents

- In March 2017, at York University's Glendon College, anti-Semitic graffiti and bomb threats were found in the men's bathroom in York Hall. This wasn't the first incident, similar threats and messages targeting various cultural and religious groups were found earlier in the year. (Davidson, 2017)
- In November 2017, a self-proclaimed conspiracy theorist associated with an alumni group at University of Toronto (U of T) uttered antisemitic remarks on a University of Winnipeg student run radio station. University officials did not immediately respond, while the radio station quickly apologized.
- In December 2017, 39 students affiliated with the sanctioned McMaster University student group, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) posted over 287 denigrating social media posts. Many of the posts: demonized Israel, were anti-Semitic, Pro-Hitler, pro-terrorist, called for violence against Jews and incited illicit physical activity. The posts in question were largely bigoted and anti-American. The SPHR president, Lina Assi, was allegedly: an ardent supporter of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and an admirer of both Hamas and Hezbollah. Of the openly anti-Semitic McMaster SPHR students, the approbation for Hitler expressed by Rawan Qaddoura, Esra Bengizi and Nadera Masad were amongst the most shocking of posts. (2017)



Figure 1 A tweet from Nadera Masad, a McMaster University student affiliated with the campus group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights. Photo: Canary Mission.

- In December 2017, university students in Vancouver, British Columbia were confronted by anti-Israel protesters who grabbed and burned an Israeli flag at a protest.
- In October 2018, Jewish high school students attended an anti-racism seminar at York University, they were told to “shut the f*** up” and listen to “real persecuted minorities.”
- In October 2018, a graduating student made inappropriate remarks at a convocation ceremony at Western University

Anti-Israel activity including pro-BDS activity allowed on campus

At the November 2018 National General Meeting, members of the Canadian Federation of Students voted to endorse the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement in solidarity with Palestinian Human Rights advocates. In passing this motion, the Federation reaffirms its support of the Palestinian cause and peoples, and pledges to support Palestine solidarity organizations on a case-by-case basis. It will also support member locals in launching weapons divestment campaigns and exploring and implementing existing BDS campaigns and organizing resources. The CFS committed to granting BDS-supporting organizations with in-kind support and donations of up to \$500 each, encouraging member locals to promote BDS on their campuses. In the statement released following the resolution’s adoption, the CFS said it continues to oppose anti-Semitism and pledged to prioritize the voice of Jewish student groups like Independent Jewish Voices, which supports the BDS campaign. This stance notably diverges from that of most mainstream Jewish communal bodies which have repeatedly denounce BDS campaign for rejecting the rights of Jewish people and fostering hostility against Jews and Zionists. The motion was strongly rejected by 17 Canadian chapters of the Hillel, which called BDS antisemitic and the latest move to support it anti-academic, fuelled by hatred, and counterproductive to peace. (Algemeiner, 2019)

According to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) , the BDS movement is a call from Palestinian Civil Society which non-violently targets institutional and economic complicity with occupation and

human rights abuses. In adopting BDS, the CFS joins the echelons of other Canadian civil society bodies who embody the notion of BDS, including the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)-Ontario, the United Church, the Mennonite Church of Canada, and the Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante (ASSÉ). All of the aforementioned have adopted similar resolutions. (CFS, 2018)

In the ongoing war against Israel on campus, the claim by student activities that they are seeking peace while consistently objecting Israeli government policies, Jews are being singled out and subjected to anti-Semitism by virtue of being Jewish. It is no wonder students are afraid to speak out, when the mere body that collectively represents them, welcomes vitriolic speech, anti-Semitic rhetoric and daunting propaganda.

- In May 2017, a Jewish social work student at Ryerson University May 2017 was denied placement by an administrator at two Jewish organizations of her choice.
- In September 2017, a British Columbia construction school reversed its decision to bar an Israeli student because of his nationality based on a policy instituted in response to a recent UN resolution.
- In October 2017, an anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement motion was rejected at University of Manitoba.
- Michael Lynk, UN rapporteur spoke at a November 2017 fundraiser for Canadian Friends of Sabeel at University of Toronto.
- In November 2017, Yves Engler, anti-Israel author was permitted to speak at various university campuses to promote his book.
- In December 2017, CFS Ontario Chair Nour Alideeb spoke at 'Hands off Jerusalem Rally' uttering antisemitic remarks.
- In December 2017, Holocaust-denier, Professor Anthony Hall was reinstated at the University of Lethbridge.
- In January 2018, the University of Toronto Graduate Students Union bid for a permanent committee to promote the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement at the University of Toronto failed.
- In November 2018, University of Manitoba rejected the Canadian Federation of Students stance on the BDS movement.
- In late 2018, Israeli Apartheid Week held a competition to design their poster for the 2019 15th Annual Israeli Apartheid Week of actions will take place all around the world between March 18th and April 8th 2019 under the theme "Stop Arming Colonialism". The contest was open to supporters at universities across Canada.



Statistics

Four Canadian universities – the University of Toronto, McGill, McMaster and York University – made the *Algemeiner*'s 2017 “1st Annual List of the U.S. and Canada’s Worst Campuses for Jewish Students,” released by the New York-based weekly publication. U of T was high on the list because it was where Israel Apartheid Week originated and has hosted “a considerable number of events in recent years portraying the Jewish state as barbarous and colonialist.” (2017)

Toronto’s Ryerson University made Simon Wiesenthal Center’s (SWC) ‘2016 Top Ten Worst Global Anti-Semitic/Anti-Israel Incidents’ as a result of a pro-BDS vote (boycott, sanctions and divestment campaign), antisemitic graffiti, and an intensive campaign to counter a motion to mark Holocaust remembrance. The university continues to host antisemitic events and has been the focus of numerous complaints of antisemitism, including one issued against a teaching assistant and claims of discrimination in the work place in the Faculty of Social Work in 2017.

A study released by AMCHA Initiative, a non-profit organization that works to combat antisemitism on American college campuses, demonstrated how academic boycotts of Israel pose a serious threat to Jewish students, significantly increasing the likelihood of antisemitism on campus with the support of campus faculty.

A September 2017 study by Stanford Graduate School of Education's research group on the Concentration in Education and Jewish Studies titled "Safe and on the Sidelines – Jewish Students and the Israel-Palestine Conflict on Campus" found students interviewed, reported low levels of anti-Semitism or discomfort traced to either the carelessness of student speech or to tensions within campus debates about the Israel-Palestine conflict, characterized as strident, inflammatory, and divisive. In citing this report, Professor Boudreau charged with investigating anti-Semitism on McGill campus noted that the tones of student activism creates a divided campus that leaves little room for reasoned, productive debate. (Boudreau, 2017)

Key Issues for Canadian Universities

Freedom of Speech

The inability of universities to set red lines back then resulted in the mess they find themselves in today. A campus environment that winked at veiled antisemitism ended up opening the door to blatant hatred not only against Jewish students but other minorities. (Benlolo, 2017)

The focus on free speech plays out when it comes to confronting acts of intolerance. For example, in November 2017, when razorblade-laden white supremacist posters appeared on the campuses of University of Toronto, administrators were reluctant to shut the door in the name of free speech. Posters were removed because of they violated pre-approval rules, not based on their offensive messaging and content. (Amin, 2017) (Boatto, 2017)

Freedom of speech is highly valued. Comparable to other rights, the freedom of speech is not absolute. In situations in which an equal or higher right is infringed, a freedom can be restricted. This is particularly the case, when human dignity is attacked. Incitement of hatred against a specific race or religion or other ways of degrading them are examples of such attacks.

In late January 2018, white nationalist posters were found on campus at the University of New Brunswick. The posters made inflammatory statements about the former residential school system and called on readers to reject what it called "an anti-white narrative being pushed in media and academia. The editor of a student newspaper permitted an antisemitic editorial to appear in the paper under the guises of free speech. The editor-in-chief, Anna DeLuca was subsequently removed from her duties at The Baron after publishing the op-ed and interview with the head of the group that initially posted the racist posters on campus. The Baron is an independent student-run publication overseen by its own student board of directors, making its own decisions on affairs. (Bissett, 2018)

Universities are ideal environments in which to have difficult discussions. In November 2017, the University of British Columbia attempted to pass policy on free speech which ended up denouncing those whose speech might create a toxic environment while maintaining that speech rights are no more important than equality rights. The University of British Columbia has shelved a draft of a new statement

on freedom of expression that professors argued was necessary to provide boundaries amid a wave of controversies at Canadian universities about how conflicts over speech and discrimination are addressed.

In early January 2019, concerns were raised over controversial speaker, Professor Hatem Bazian of UC Berkeley's forthcoming speaking engagement at OISE. Bazian is notably a rabble-rousing professor regularly cited for anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist vitriol. His website is penned with his latest diatribe against Israel, which is loaded with conspiracies and wild accusations. (Fouse, 2019) "Israel and the Zionist leaders are deeply connected to extreme rightwing and in some cases neo-Nazi groups across Europe, the US, and Latin America which undermines any claims of countering anti-Semitism by a state that is emboldening and providing legitimacy to groups, movements, and individuals that belong in the dustbin of history." (Bazian, 2019) Additionally, Bazian has a 4.6/5 rating on the website 'Rate my Racist Professor'.² The Dean of Toronto's OISE, Glen A. Jones, was contacted by a concerned OISE alumnus. Jones is Professor of Higher Education, and Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto was contacted. His response was deplorable. He allegedly spent time reviewing the multiple university policy documents on free speech, academic freedom, and anti-Semitism and racism. These documents can be found on a University of Toronto webpage on freedom of speech.³ The documentation notes that "The purpose of the University depends upon an environment of tolerance and mutual respect. Every member should be able to work, live, teach and learn in a University free from discrimination and harassment. No member of the University should use language or indulge in behaviour intended to demean others based on their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, or disability. Nevertheless, particularly in cases of dispute and controversy, as the *Statement* [on Free Speech] says, "the University's primary obligation is to protect the free speech of all involved. The University must allow the fullest range of debate. It should not limit that debate by preordaining conclusions or punishing or inhibiting the reasonable exercise of free speech. ... [T]he values of mutual respect and civility may, on occasion, be superseded by the need to protect lawful freedom of speech." "However," the statement continues, "members should not weigh lightly the shock, hurt, anger or even the silencing effect that may be caused by use of such speech." Jones went on to say that the University's primary obligation is to protect the free speech of all involved.

Debates over freedom of expression have erupted on university campuses over the years and have at times flared in violence. At other universities, faculty members have been harassed online after denouncing right-wing speakers, while a few universities have forced instructors who made controversial remarks to take leaves of absence.

² Rate my Racist Professor: Their mission is to expose and raise awareness on incidences of racism, bigotry, intolerance and abuse of position within the academic community in North America. The objective of their website is to create an easy-to-use interface for students on North American campuses to rate the racism of their professors. The aim is that the website will not only draw attention to these offending academics, but to have students who have experienced such issues first-hand comment on these incidents and contribute to the site. They hope to both create a dialogue and an ever-evolving database of racist professors currently influencing students in the U.S. and Canada.
<https://ratemyracistprofessor.com/our-mission/>

³ <http://freespeech.utoronto.ca/>

For the most-part, free-speech battles in Canada have been less heated. A campus environment that would wink its approval at such thinly veiled antisemitism will end up opening the gate for hatred against all minorities. (Dyck, 2017)

Simon Wiesenthal: "Freedom of speech is not freedom to propagate hatred."

Failure to Recognize Connection Between Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism

On May 2, 2017, Prime Minister Trudeau stated that Canada was one of the first countries to officially recognize Israel, and we are proud to call Israel our partner and call Israelis our friends. Canada and Israel are closely linked in heart and in mind by common democratic values and close people-to-people connections. These provide the foundation of an expanding bilateral relationship, which includes ongoing efforts to promote peace and stability in the Middle East. Today, while we celebrate Israel's independence, we also reaffirm our commitment to fight anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Israel and its people continue to face threats throughout the world, including here in Canada. We stand on guard against a resurgence of anti-Semitism, hate, and discrimination in all its forms. (2017)

Campus officials in Canada and elsewhere, fail to recognize this reality, thereby enabling the expansion of a poisoned atmosphere on campus.

Infiltration of student government, campus clubs and media by Israel haters

An analysis of McMaster University student tweets revealed that they were uttered to advance their anti-Israel agenda. The posts, which included outright anti-Semitism, praised Hitler, equated Zionists with Nazis, supported terrorist groups and demonized Jews while calling for violence against them. An in-depth investigation into the conduct of the students was undertaken. (2017)

The debate centering around the BDS movement on campus has become an insidious behind-the-door-coup comprised of student governments, campus clubs and student media outlets who are promoting Israel and Jewish hatred at Canadian universities.

In a report released in 2018, '*Investigation of Allegations of Anti-Semitism at the October 23rd, 2017 Meeting of the General Assembly of the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU)*', authored by Professor Spencer Boudreau, it was ascertained that the debate on BDS issues meets no academic standard. Boudreau wrote that he could unequivocally say with regret that, based on the evidence examined, did not see any sign of a reasoned or productive debate at McGill regarding contentious issues surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict. (Boudreau, 2017)

Students are using every avenue to advance their agenda. For example, the University of Toronto Graduate Students Union, an attempt to establish a permanent committee to promote BDS failed on appeal. York University Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA York) claimed that York faculty of environment studies (FES) had voted to boycott the Arava Institute for Environmental studies in Israel (AIES). While claiming this as a major victory of their ongoing efforts, President and vice-chancellor of York Rhonda Lenton released a statement that the claim was false and that no such academic boycott was considered or voted on, nor was the term 'boycott' included in the motion brought to the FES faculty council.

CFS Ontario chairperson Nour Alideeb was re elected for an additional term. This news came despite FSWC's complaint regarding her remarks at an anti- Israel rally which took place in Toronto in December 2017. Alideeb stated that she had the privilege of representing over 350,000 students across the province of Ontario, and claimed that students' tuition money was going to pay for military resources in Israel to kill children. She asserted that Zionism is rooted in white supremacy, racism, and anti-blackness. She went on to say that this is colonialism and we cannot allow them to divide us. The vilification of the very Jewish students she represented went unanswered by CFS leadership and correspondence at both federal and provincial level confirmed a lack of understanding regarding the nature of antisemitism today.

FSWC issued a letter of response in January 2018:

We strongly disagree with your characterization of Israel as an apartheid state and your conflating racism with the right to self-determination expressed through Zionism. In fact, the definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, of which Canada is a member state, recognizes that denying Jewish people the right to self-determination is a form of antisemitism. Such language has been used time and time again as a cover for antisemitism.

Control of student politics is not new.

Over the years, McGill's student paper has been the subject of criticism for banning pro-Zionist points of views. York University's contentious mural depicting armed struggle against Israel continues to hang in the Student Centre years later with support of the student body and a hands off approach of administration.



Recommendations

The problem of campus antisemitism is real and growing and requires real solutions. Administrators must take the responsibility of countering antisemitism without explaining away hate speech and actions while holding students and staff to policies of objectivity in and out of the classroom and respectful academic debate.

Key steps:

- Adopt a clear definition of antisemitism based on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition. Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. (IHRA, 2016)

- Familiarize and train administrators, faculty, security and other university personnel as to the definition of antisemitism, which explain when “anti-Israelism” and anti-Zionism cross the line into antisemitism.
- Review and augment campus security so that they are prepared for and able to respond to antisemitism with the seriousness it deserves and protect Jewish students from harassment.
- Exercise moral leadership by publicly condemning “anti-Israelism” that crosses the line into antisemitism. (name and shame bigotry from academic halls of education).
- Ensure responsible policies in place to hold student governments responsible. For example, anti-disruption policies for students blocking or obstructing or interrupting speech on campuses so to ensure equal opportunity combined with freedom of speech should be in place.

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