

# Jews for Judaism

# Lifeline

KEEPING JEWS JEWISH 1:5781

By Rex Murphy

**R**ecent demonstrations, a mix of pro-Palestine and pro-Hamas — the terrorist organization that calls in its charter for the elimination of Israel — in Canada and around the world, have had a notably corrosive and vicious thread running through them.

They have been darkly embroidered with extreme and repugnant slogans and signs, calls against Jews of profoundest insult, and pockmarked in some cities, Toronto among them, with the Nazi swastika, cries of “Death to the Jews,” and the lacerating declaration from some protesters that Israelis are present-day Nazis.

These manifestations are not merely the product of the moment, adrenalin-fuelled anger tripping demonstrators into unintended extremes of language. They are not rhetoric. They are meant. Death to the Jews was a call that meant precisely what was said — death to Jews.

“Death to the Jews was a call that meant precisely what was said”

That slogan was a perfect summoning, and a deliberate summoning of the dark satanic reign of Hitler and his Nazis, whose highest goal was not the conquest of Russia, Europe or the world. Hoped-for-conquest was secondary. They saw it as the path to enabling their first and primary ambition: the elimination via mass extermination of every single Jewish person to which the world gave breath.

Adolf Hitler would have forsaken all, even empire over the entire world, in exchange for the slaughter of every single Jewish person, man, woman and child on the face of the Earth, and only because they were Jewish.

Thus, to summon Hitler to your side, by name and symbol, is the authentic stigmata of anti-Semitism in its full and putrid expression.

We talk a lot these days of hate. Though in this silly and self-absorbed woke time the word is greatly diminished. It far too often gets thrown out over purely and petty differences of opinion.

Those who want to study hate in its essence have merely to look behind.

Hate in its purest form, with all its undiluted rage and fervour, has too frequently targeted Jews. Eighty years ago the world saw hate in its vilest, most savage



manifestation. The greatest hate crime in the history of the world, a crime in which hate was the only fuel, torture and death its only aim, and unspeakable malice its companion servant, was the Holocaust.

To bait present-day Jews with being the mirror of their persecutors in those days, with being the same as the sadists and merciless murderers of six million of their ancestors, goes into some region far beyond insult, and outside all boundaries of protest.

Anti-Semitism is the primal hate, the deepest hate, and the most enduring hate. It is a fire never extinguished: the embers always remain aglow. It may be stayed for a while, but the flicker of a single event can call it back to full flame.

So when we see in 2021 cars draped with swastika flags patrolling metropolitan streets, or see a despicable bigot, part-time contributor to CNN (since fired) boldly and publicly post on the internet that “The world today needs a Hitler,” we are somewhere we should not be.

And when we hear chants of “Death to the Jews” in the

streets of Western cities, it might be an occasion to look to those unquenchable embers.

And what calls the winds that rouse those embers today? The fact of the existence of the state of Israel. Israel is a state that was meant to be — after the devilish enormity of the Holocaust — a haven; a tiny pitch of earth and sand, a postage stamp of territory, in which Jews after centuries of persecutions and anti-Semitism, and after Hitler’s Goyaesque extermination camps, might find shelter and security.

That haven-state has been fighting for its existence, and for the very lives of all who have become its citizens, since the days of its

birth. There is no other country so continuously embattled, no country that has been so often the object of terror, no country so frequently under negative judgment from the United Nations, and finally no country of which it may be said if it loses one combat, it loses all.

It would be natural to think in such a context, that a world that promised “Never Again” would be obliging and re-

sourceful in its defence, not only in wars, but against the brutal propaganda efforts that have plagued Israel from its first days. It would also be natural that in such a context the successes of Israel in building so modern and democratic a state would hold a good part of the world’s admiration.

Natural, too, that its pioneering breakthroughs in science, its ingenuity and invention, and most importantly the tested courage of all its citizens under conditions that would suffocate most other countries, would be a blazon for other countries, which bear none of its continuous peril or its minuscule territory; imagine an Israel the size of Canada.

Imagine an Israel the size of Canada

It is a nation of the greatest accomplishments under the most arduous of circumstances. Its science rivals that of the world’s richest and greatest nations. Its medical research and hospitals are of the best. It has built a modern and democratic nation, while under continuous mortal siege. Does the world applaud?

No. It makes singular demands on the most imperilled state. Its critics — and they are legion — single out Israel for every flaw, while an empire of tyranny (China) or one of rawest terror (North Korea) summons no mass protests on the streets of the civilized West. For Israel it is always under the moral microscope; for the rest it’s a squint through the wrong end of the telescope.

The recent protests demonstrated that animus against Israel is of a special kind, that an element beyond reason or disagreement places Israel in some very distinctive category. And to my mind it is in that category — however complicated other matters in the Middle East may be — for one simple reason: it is the homeland of Jews.

*National Post – May 20, 2021*

***Anti-Semitism is the primal hate, the deepest hate, and the most enduring hate.***

# We Need Some Outrage Over Anti-Semitism

By Avi Benlolo

**T**here is no monopoly on discrimination. In the Jewish world, we have stood up throughout history for freedom and civil rights. Our people have proudly walked with every modern-day liberation movement, including participating in and supporting Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights movement, the feminist movement and most recently the LGBTQ2 movement. We are proud leaders in the promotion of social welfare policies and legal and ethical rights. Upholding Jewish values, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, for instance, is fondly remembered for fighting against gender discrimination and became the first tenured female at Columbia Law School.

Despite our concern for others over the centuries however, it has not been matched for the Jewish community in the past couple of weeks. Shockingly, despite the overt anti-Semitism on the streets of North America and Europe, there has been a deafening silence. Jewish people have been assaulted in New York, Los Angeles and Toronto. In Toronto this past weekend, Palestinian protesters carried Hamas flags at their rally, while many held anti-Semitic signs and slogans. One read, "Good Job Israel, Hitler Would be Proud."

A brick shattered the window of a Kosher pizza parlour in Manhattan. Video captured a swarm of men attacking diners at a Sushi restaurant in Los Angeles, and synagogues are reporting vandalism in places like Arizona, Illinois and New York. As in Toronto, a brawl broke out in Times Square while the Diamond District was also attacked by a gang of pro-Palestinians. Drive-bys consisting of Pro-Palestinian groups have become commonplace in Jewish areas — racially tinged epithets being shouted at young Jewish children and adults alike.

Drive-bys have become commonplace in Jewish areas

Worse, over the past number of days, my phone has been ringing off the hook and messages have been pouring in from staff at corporations and school boards who have a growing sense of fear and discomfort in their institutions. They are shocked by the silence of their peers and colleagues whom they have worked with for years to promote equity for other groups within their institutions. But now, when anti-Semitism is at an all-time high, when they are being personally targeted

*Together,  
we must stand  
to uplift all who  
are suffering.*



Demonstrators take part in an anti-Israel protest in Montreal on May 15, 2021.

on the street and their freedoms seem constrained, they wonder why there is silence. Why have their institutions not unequivocally condemned anti-Semitism, period?

Condemnation of anti-Semitism is not a political matter. It is an anti-discrimination matter. One local school board completely convoluted the matter in a memo that tried to reassure its staff about the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Instead, it ostracized its Jewish staff and probably inflamed

passions further by saying in reference to the conflict that it is "committed to working from anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-colonial frameworks." Effectively, it politicized the institution and possibly legitimized anti-Semitism by falsely accusing Israel of being a racist, oppressive, colonial state. Naturally, this has put its employees and students on edge and pitted them against each other.

This is the time for leaders to step up and publicly defend their Jewish friends and neighbours. First and foremost, all public and private institutions must issue statements condemning anti-Semitism while providing guidelines for appropriate conduct and communication. Second, authorities, including law enforcement and the

attorney general, must thoroughly investigate and if necessary charge people who promote hate speech and are found to have committed hate crimes. The fact that some Jewish neighbourhoods are setting up their own security systems above and beyond our public law enforcement services may be indicative that public needs are not being entirely met. Finally, faith-based organizations and friends of the Jewish community must speak out against anti-Semitism and visibly extend a hand.

Article I of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that "all human beings are born free and equal

in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

We are all equal and must strive to advance human rights for all people. There is no shortage of pain and suffering on our small planet and unfortunately, we are seeing an upward global trend of inequality,

racism and discrimination. Together, we must stand to uplift all who are suffering, including the Black and Asian communities and persecuted peoples like the Uyghurs, Tibetans and Rohingya.

And yes, in the coming days and weeks, we need to see some outrage against anti-Semitism. I am calling on my friends outside of the Jewish community to stand up and speak out.

*National Post – May 28, 2021*

PHOTO BY GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

# It is starting to be unsafe to be a Canadian Jew

By Michael Mostyn

**D**ear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, premiers, mayors, university presidents and all Canadians of good conscience,

We have just witnessed a wake-up call for Canadian Jewry. There is a palpable fear from within our community that Jewish life here is becoming unsafe. I have never had so many individuals contact me to question their personal safety after witnessing the shocking anti-Semitic incidents of recent days.

In community forums, people are indicating their fear for the future of their children and grandchildren in this country. That some would even seriously consider emigrating to Israel at this time — while the image of Israel being bombarded by thousands of Hamas rockets are fresh in our minds — indicates just how pessimistic many Canadian Jews are suddenly becoming about their families' long-term prospects.

On May 15, thousands of people gathered for an anti-Israel rally in downtown Toronto, in blatant violation of Ontario's COVID-19 health orders. As the event ended, police trying to evacuate pro-Israel counter-protesters were overwhelmed, leading to several assaults. Meanwhile, some "pro-Palestinian" demonstrators displayed a swastika and cheered on Hamas — a group that calls for the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews.

The next day, in Montreal, attendees at a pro-Israel rally — which is permitted under Quebec's public health orders — were violently attacked by young men bearing Palestinian flags, who used tear gas, threw stones and physically assaulted local Jews, all while shouting anti-Semitic taunts. Again, police were overwhelmed, forcing the premature cancellation of the pro-Israel event.

These shocking incidents are just the tip of the iceberg. Across the country, Jews have been bombarded with online hate, and Orthodox Jews observing the recent Shavuot holiday were followed and harassed by vehicles with Palestinian flags while walking around their own neighbourhoods, where they are supposed to feel safe. In Edmonton, it went a step further when, after speeding down a residential street yelling "Free Palestine," a group of young men approached a

homeowner's door asking threateningly, "Do any Jews live here?"

If things continue this way, it is only a matter of time before a Canadian Jew is seriously injured, or worse, by an anti-Israel attacker.

There is a growing crisis of confidence in some of our institutions among many Canadian Jews. At times, it seems there is a failure by many to acknowledge a basic truth: that the anti-Israel movement in Canada has become one of the largest, if not the largest, engine of Jew-hatred in this country.

The sentiments on display recently are not new, and are deeply rooted in some sectors of society. Numerous journalists, including some from mainstream outlets, have just signed an open letter arguing that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is "not complicated" and must be considered "ethnic cleansing." Tellingly, their letter lists the Palestinian victims of the recent round of conflict, but pretends Israeli victims don't exist at all.

At McGill University, while the administration essentially preemptively countered it, a petition is still circulating (which has been signed by over 1,100 McGill "constituents"), urging the university to not only sever ties with Israeli universities, but also to define Zionism — the belief in the Jewish right to self-determination — as a form of racism punishable under the school's policies. The petition's organizers are feverishly pursuing their campaign against the administration and pro-Israel Jewish students, which, if successful, would have the effect of shutting down Jewish life on campus.

We have seen this play out before, across the Atlantic. Over the past two decades, tens of thousands of Jews have fled France due to out-of-control anti-Zionism and society's reluctance to address it. Some of those French Jews thought they had found refuge in Canada, particularly in Quebec — but what are they to think given what they are now seeing? The anti-Semitic murders of French Jews such as Ilan Halimi and Sarah Halimi (no relation), the terror attacks on Jewish schools and stores in France — none of this emerged from a vacuum, but was rather the inevitable result of a culture of hate and impunity that was allowed to fester.

*There is a palpable fear from within our community that Jewish life here is becoming unsafe.*

Anti-Israel groups in Canada seem to believe that they are above the law. In Toronto, illegal anti-Israel rallies have taken place downtown for years, despite repeated warnings by B'nai Brith that this would eventually lead to violence. And in Montreal, anti-Zionist forces are no doubt emboldened by the city's repeated refusal to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, which correctly explains that extreme anti-Israel sentiment can sometimes cross the line into anti-Semitism.

At this time of crisis, Canadian Jews are looking for solidarity and action. In order to stem the tide of hate, and provide assurance that they are indeed safe and welcome here, we urge all levels of government, universities and civil society to take the following three steps:

1. Rather than simply condemning violence and anti-Semitism, publicly identify and acknowledge the current source: anti-Israel extremism;
2. Adopt the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism without delay, especially within universities where the problem is most acute; and
3. Utilize all means and legal tools at your disposal to prevent attacks on Canadian Jews, while recognizing the right to peaceful protest under safe conditions.

The Jewish community has contributed immensely to the soul of our nation. We now require decisive action to push back against this mounting anti-Semitism.

*Michael Mostyn is the chief executive officer of B'nai Brith Canada. National Post – May 27, 2021*

**Jews for Judaism Lifeline**  
KEEPING JEWS JEWISH

LIFELINE is a free publication of  
JEWS FOR JUDAISM (Canada).

**JEWS FOR JUDAISM**

3110 Bathurst St., Box 54042 Toronto ON M6A 3B7  
T 416-789-0020 • F 416-789-0030 • TF 866-307-4362  
www.jewsforjudaism.ca

**Executive Director:** Julius Ciss  
julius@jewsforjudaism.ca

**Education Director:** Rabbi Michael Skobac  
rabbiskobac@jewsforjudaism.ca

**Administrative Director:** Carol Spodek  
carol@jewsforjudaism.ca

**Board of Directors:**  
Frank Mayer • Alex Katz • David Zolty

**JEWS FOR JUDAISM Branches:**  
Toronto • Los Angeles



UJA Federation  
OF GREATER TORONTO

[jewsforjudaism.ca](http://jewsforjudaism.ca)

LIFE 3 LINE



# OUR APPEAL TO CANADIANS: STAND WITH THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE FACE OF ANTISEMITISM

**The past month has been extremely difficult for Canadian Jews.** We have witnessed Jewish businesses boycotted, Jewish organizations targeted, Jewish students intimidated, and Jewish citizens assaulted, all ostensibly triggered by the recent conflict between Hamas, an organization long recognized by Canada as a terrorist entity, and Israel.

What is most frightening is not the brazen assaults, vandalism and harassment our community has endured – as terrible as they have been – but the reluctance of many Canadians to stand in solidarity with their fellow citizens who are under attack.

Antisemitism, especially in its modern guise of anti-Zionism, is not simply an issue of masked extremists who beat Jews and destroy their property. It is also an issue of some of our society's most esteemed institutions – universities, school boards, political parties, unions, the media – ignoring Jew hatred, and in so doing, providing cover for it.

How else are we to consider the fact that there are dozens of news articles detailing “peaceful” anti-Israel protests across Canada that failed to mention the explicit calls for violence against Jews or the actual violence against Jews that took place at these events?

**“Anti-Zionists” claim they are not antisemitic, that they are merely criticizing Israel and its supporters. This argument is false.**

- When Canadian Jews are demonized and targeted for supporting Israel, that is anti-semitism.
- When in the name of criticizing Israel, anti-Zionists pelt Canadian Jews with stones, that is antisemitism.
- When Jewish businesses in Canada are boycotted, that is anti-Semitism.
- When Jewish youth are subjected to merciless harassment and bullying online, that is antisemitism.
- When Canadian institutions whitewash or simply ignore these acts, this too contributes to antisemitism.

As the ceasefire in the Middle East takes hold, the protests in Canada may eventually subside. **But it is clear that antisemitism persists in our country** – a toxic threat that must be combated not just by Canada's Jewish community, but by our entire society.

We call on our fellow Canadians to stand up to antisemitism in all of its forms and to challenge it wherever and whenever it rears its ugly head.

This full-page newspaper ad  
was cosponsored by over  
200 Jewish organizations and  
institutions in Canada including

[jewsforjudaism.ca](http://jewsforjudaism.ca)  
**KEEPING JEWS JEWISH**