



**Submission to House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights  
Antisemitism and Additional Measures to Address the Fears of Canada's Jewish  
Community**

**Introduction**

Canadian Jews were entitled to the love and support of their fellow Canadians as they grieved over the rape, murder, mutilation, and kidnapping of their kin by Hamas on October 7.

But instead, a tsunami of Jew-hatred swept over our streets and university campuses.

Recent months have made clear that a cancer of Jew-hatred has metastasized within Canadian society. It has now emerged to threaten not just Canada's Jewish community, but Canadian society as a whole. For a society in which hatred of Jews is tolerated is a society in which hatred of anyone is tolerated.

This submission is made on behalf of Bring Love. Bring Love is a newly-formed grassroots organization whose goal is to help mobilize the lay Catholic community to combat antisemitism.<sup>1</sup> Bring Love is based on the teaching of Pope John Paul II that Jews are our beloved brothers and sisters,<sup>2</sup> and Pope Francis' call to "commit ourselves to ensure anti-Semitism is banned from the human community".<sup>3</sup> In doing so, we take our inspiration from the Prayer of St. Francis, "where there is hatred, let me sow love".

Bring Love complements at a grassroots level the sustained and ongoing work of the Catholic Church in combatting hatred in general, and antisemitism in particular. As a lay organization, Bring Love does not purport to speak on behalf of the Catholic Church.

Bring Love is a member of the Alliance Combatting Campus Antisemitism (ALCCA).

The shocking rise of antisemitism on university campuses in Canada has been documented in oral testimony and written submissions. We will not attempt another catalogue of incidents of Jew-hatred. Rather, we will make some general observations on the problem and propose that the government should:

- Convene a national summit on antisemitism
- Require universities to protect Jewish students
- Enforce existing laws against hate-filled protests

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.BringLove.ca](http://www.BringLove.ca) (website under development)

<sup>2</sup> Speech of His Holiness Pope John Paul II at the Rome Synagogue, 13 April 1986

<sup>3</sup> Greeting of His Holiness Pope Francis to a Delegation of the World Congress of Mountain Jews, Monday, 5 November 2018

### Jew-hatred is destructive of society

Jacques Maritain wrote that “civic love or friendship is the very soul or animating form of every political society”.<sup>4</sup> This friendship binds Canadians together as a society; it helps explain why Canadians are so quick to help their neighbours in need.

But when the civic love that animates society is displaced by hatred, whether of Jews or of any other group, the very ties that bind society together fray and risk being severed.

Thus, while antisemitism’s first and most obvious victims are Jews, if antisemitism becomes normalized, we will all suffer. Widespread adoption of antisemitic views will effect grave moral injury on individuals and society as a whole. It will open the door to hatred against other identifiable groups. It will even injure those who adopt such hate-filled views. For as Socrates observed, doing evil injures not just the victim; it injures the evil-doer as well.

The Catholic Church teaches that one cannot be a Christian and an antisemite. Catholic schools combat antisemitism, by, for example, teaching students about the Holocaust. Every Catholic knows, or should know, that Jew-hatred is a grave sin.

But we—Catholics and non-Catholics—live in the world and are influenced by it. Our children, when they attend universities that now seem to be steeped in antisemitism, risk being influenced by this antisemitism. The good that we do in our schools risks being swept away by the tsunami of hatred sweeping across our universities.

While the cancer of Jew-hatred has been spreading in our midst for many years now, its sudden emergence into the mainstream makes excising it urgent. It is this urgency that drove us to organize Bring Love. This same urgency should animate Canadian society as a whole, and this committee. As George Weigel recently observed, “The hour is late. The threats are growing. Wake up.”<sup>5</sup>

### Universities should be places of robust debate, not hate

Universities should be places that deepen and transmit knowledge. But more than that, they should develop what St. John Henry Newman called the “faculty of perception in intellectual matters”.<sup>6</sup>

Freedom of inquiry and speech is essential to the mission of any university. Students should be confronted with views they disagree with and be free to disagree in their turn. But there is a line between robust, yet respectful, debate, and hate. That line can be hard to delineate, because the risk of categorizing whatever view one disagrees with as unacceptable hatred is ever present.

We have seen speech on campuses that clearly crosses the line into hatred of Jews. The slogan, “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” is well-understood as a call for genocide of Israelis, while “globalize the Intifada” is a call to kill Jews around the

---

<sup>4</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State*, (University of Chicago Press, 1951), p 209.

<sup>5</sup> George Weigel, “The Grave Sin of Jew-Hatred”, *First Things*, 8 Nov 2023.

<sup>6</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*.

world, including here in Canada. Protesters have even attacked Jews and Jewish spaces on campuses. Violent words have led to violence.

Yet some in our universities, who hitherto claimed that speech that they disagree with is violence, now appear to justify speech calling for violence against Jews as an exercise of free speech.

This must be stopped. While no university student should be safe from hearing views they disagree with, they must be safe from calls for hatred and violence against them.

### Measures to address the fears of Canada's Jewish community

While society should be animated by civic love or friendship, love cannot be legislated. Even hate is difficult to legislate against. We must create conditions that foster civic love. This is not just a job for governments; it may not even be primarily a job for governments. Rather, we need to mobilize as a society to show our Jewish neighbours that we will not let civic love be displaced by hatred in Canada.

The jurisdiction of the Federal Government to undertake measures to combat antisemitism is limited. Hate speech provisions in the *Criminal Code* are enforced by provincial authorities. Human rights legislation is both federal and provincial, depending on the sector. Universities come within provincial jurisdiction. Laws that apply to encampments at universities are also provincial.

The fact that this committee is holding hearings into antisemitism is itself a step forward, because it shines a light on the problem.

We propose three measures that this committee can recommend:

**National summit on antisemitism:** Recognizing that antisemitism is a whole-of-society problem, the government should convene a national summit on antisemitism.

**Require universities to protect Jewish students:** The federal government should use its financial leverage to require universities to ensure the safety of Jewish students. For example, the existence and enforcement of effective policies to protect Jewish students could be made a condition of eligibility for federal research grants.

**Enforce laws against hate-filled protests:** While the enforcement of laws against hate-filled protests may be within provincial jurisdiction, the federal government should urge provincial authorities to enforce existing laws against hate speech. To this end, the government should convene a meeting of federal and provincial attorneys general to discuss increased and consistent enforcement of laws against hate speech and intimidation.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Bring Love

27 May 2024



---

W. Michael G. Osborne