



**Antisemitism on Campus:  
The Virus that Continues to Spread**

*Updated February 2020*

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

Antisemitism 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. Antisemitism on Canadian campuses is not a new phenomenon. 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 those that implemented similar measures. Discriminatory policies targeting Jews divulged the prevalence of antisemitic biases. Most of these discriminatory policies were not lifted until after the Second World War (Abella, 1983) (Beauchemin, n.d.).

Although much has changed in Canada over the past decades, recent massacres in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and California serve as a harsh reminder that prejudice is still with us.

The global explosion of antisemitism and anti-Israel activity continues to grow with increasing intensity and violence. The 2018 Hate Crime in Canada report produced by Statistics Canada disclosed that Jews continue to be the minority group in Canada most targeted by hate crime (Toronto Police Services, 2018).

Antisemitism and hate crimes against the Jewish community have increased significantly in Canada over the past 5 years. Canada has seen an upsurge of antisemitism in all forms including:

online, public protests, politics, on university campuses and unabashed public assaults. Antisemitic 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 antisemitism 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 antisemitism. Canadian campuses are not immune. Prejudicial exhibitions have plagued college campuses, following a trend of antisemitism 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 antisemitism 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 are apprehensive of possible repercussions of coming forward with concerns and fears. Administrators need to be clear in identifying the intent behind incidents.

Antisemitism is a pervasive problem. Administrators at Canadian colleges and universities need to act accordingly. If they are not calling out antisemitism - when antisemitism, 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 antisemitism on campus, Jewish students need to take a stand, now more than ever (Dahl, 2019).

## **Recommendations for Ending Antisemitism on Campus**

The problem of campus antisemitism is real and growing and requires real solutions.

Administrators must take responsibility for countering antisemitism without explaining away hate speech and behaviour and holding students and staff to policies of objectivity in and out of the classroom. In order to counter the rising tide of antisemitism on our campuses, we recommend that university administrations take the following key steps:

- Adopt a clear definition of antisemitism based on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition (IHRA, 2016). This definition was officially adopted by the Government of Canada in June 2019.
- Familiarize and train administrators, faculty, security and other university personnel as to the IHRA definition of 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” and anti-Zionism that crosses the line into antisemitism. Name and shame bigotry.
- 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.

## Anti-Israel and pro-BDS activity on campus

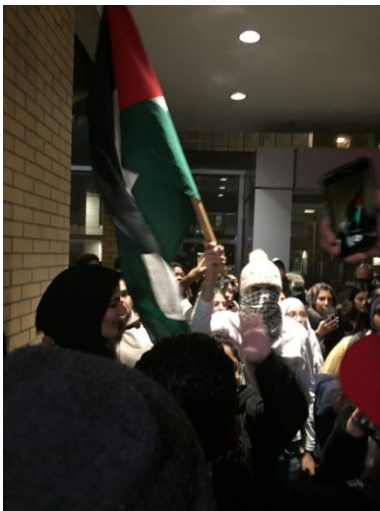
In the ongoing war against Israel on campus, Jews are being singled out and subjected to antisemitism. It is no wonder Jewish students are afraid to speak out, when student organizations that collectively represent them welcome propaganda, vitriolic speech and antisemitic rhetoric.

- York University's contentious mural glorifying violence and armed struggle against Israel continues to hang in the Student Centre years later with support of the student union and a hands-off approach of administration.



- In January 2020, a York University student tasked with conducting the opening ceremony for the campus' multicultural parade wore a shirt that read "anti-Zionist vibes only."
- In December 2019, McGill administration had to step in after a Jewish student was threatened by the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) Legislative Council with removal from the Board of Directors if she refused to cancel a trip to Israel funded by Hillel Montreal. An approved motion by SSMU calling the trip a "conflict of interest" was later overturned by the Board of Directors following a meeting between SSMU's president and university administration.
- Over the years, McGill's student paper The McGill Daily has been the subject of criticism for banning pro-Zionist points of view while at the same time waging a continuous campaign of misinformation about Israel. In November 2019, for example, an editorial by McGill Daily's editors falsely described Zionism as a "colonial movement," a "racist attitude" and "a violent practice." At the same time, McGill Daily editors refused to publish a letter to the editor written by two Jewish students decrying the paper's antisemitic bias. The letter to the editor was ultimately published after McGill administration threatened to pull Daily funding if the paper refused.

- After voting to ratify the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Committee as a standing committee in February 2019, the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU ) took another step in exposing their blatant antisemitism after a member of its Board of Directors told a Jewish student in November 2019 that a motion to support a kosher food campaign may not be put forward because it was backed by a "pro-Israel" student group. The UTGSU released a statement afterward apologizing for the incident, followed by another statement announcing the member has submitted her resignation "as a result of the antisemitic comments."
- At the end of November 2019, the York Federation of Students passed a motion supporting blocking any "representatives" of Israel from speaking on campus. FSWC has demanded York University's administration to take control of the university and immediately address the growing hatred toward Jews on campus.
- In November 2019, an antisemitic protest at York University erupted after a pro-Israel club invited a group of IDF reservists to speak at an event on campus. Initiated by the group SAIA, the protest included people chanting "intifada" and attempting to block the entrance to the event hall. FSWC immediately pressed law enforcement, government and university officials to launch an investigation and condemn the hateful protest that took place.



*An anti-Israel protest at York University on November 20, 2019, students with covered faces screamed "intifada" while attempting to shut down an event held by a Jewish club.*

- In October 2019, a Jewish student at York University sitting at a table with a sign that read "I'm a Zionist, ask me why" was verbally attacked by other students who shouted "intifada," "wipe Israel off the map," "Jews control the world" and other antisemitic slogans. Less than a month later, FSWC became aware that this same student's application to establish a pro-Israel student group was denied by the York Federation of Students (YFS) with no reason given, while the antisemitic group Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA) was ratified once again. After FSWC met with York President Rhonda Lenton and filed an access to information request, YFS ratified the pro-Israel group.
- In September 2019, University of Toronto student group Students Against Israeli Apartheid UofT invited Issam Al-Yamani to speak at the university. Al-Yamani is accused by Canadian Border Security (CBSA) of being an active member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a terrorist organization that has taken credit for murdering numerous Israelis. The University cancelled the event after an active lobbying effort by FSWC. The event was hosted instead by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).
- In February 2019, the University of Toronto's Graduate Students' Union voted to make its Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Committee permanent.
- 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.



- At the November 2018 National General Meeting, members of the Canadian Federation of Students voted to endorse the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. 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. Most mainstream Jewish communal bodies have repeatedly denounced the BDS campaign for rejecting the rights of Jewish people and fostering hostility against Jews. The CFS 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).
- In April 2018, a Jewish student at the University of Toronto student was accused of being an Israeli government agent by a pro-BDS professor after the student emailed the professor asking for some career advice. After a detailed investigation of the incident, the University announced in September of 2018 that while the professor did not behave in a “civil” fashion by making such an accusation, his behaviour did not constitute discrimination (Levy, 2018).
- In December 2017, Holocaust-denier Professor Anthony Hall was reinstated at the University of Lethbridge.
- In December 2017, CFS Ontario Chair Nour Alideeb made antisemitic remarks at the organization’s ‘Hands off Jerusalem Rally’.
- 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 November 2017, anti-Israel author Yves Engler was permitted to speak at various university campuses to promote his book.
- In November 2017, UN rapporteur Michael Lynk spoke at a fundraiser for Canadian Friends of Sabeel at University of Toronto.
- 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 May 2017, a Jewish social work student at Ryerson University May 2017 was denied placement by an administrator at the two Jewish organizations of her choice because the organizations were pro-Israel.

## Hate Graffiti and Vandalism across Canadian Campuses

- In September 2019, London police began an investigation after graffiti that included swastikas was discovered in a men's washroom at Western University.
- In April 2019, Queen's university was covered with the slogan "The Goyim Know" – an antisemitic meme that suggests Jews are involved in conspiracy against non-Jews – as well as the words "USS Liberty," referring to the US Navy ship that was attacked by the Israeli Air Force and Navy during the Six-Day War. While Israel apologized for the attack and stated it was in error, numerous conspiracy theories targeting Israel and claiming the attack was deliberate have surfaced (McCartney 2019).



- In October and November 2018, the campuses of the University of Manitoba and Carleton University were peppered by posters whose slogans read "It's ok to be white". The signs reportedly stemmed from an anonymous post in a thread on internet 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. 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 - "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 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). At the University of Manitoba, faxes with this 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 coordinated 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).



- In February 2018, graffiti depicting a swastika was found in an elevator of a residence at the University of Western Ontario.
- In January 2018, brochures depicting the marginalization of indigenous peoples were discovered on the campuses of the University of New Brunswick (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 antisemitic and anti-Indigenous rhetoric (Press, 2018).

- 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).



- 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 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, "It's okay to be white" posters were found on multiple campuses across the country 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 members faced was that after originating in the bowels of 4chan 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, the entrances to the hall where a Remembrance Day ceremony was to take place at the University of British Columbia was covered with pro-Nazi posters.
- 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 October 2017, Ottawa's Carleton University discovered the presence of anti-immigration posters from group, Generation Identity (Librach, 2017).
- In September and October 2017, flyers advertising white supremacist websites were found posted on the campuses of St. Thomas University, a predominantly Catholic liberal arts university located in Fredericton, New Brunswick, as well as at the University of New Brunswick. 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, 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 September 2017, swastikas defaced signs and placards at University of Toronto campuses.

## Other Antisemitic Events/Incidents on Canadian Campuses

- 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 February 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 antisemitic comments were not specified, reports indicate that they violated a working definition of antisemitism 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).
- In February 2018, Two UBC student groups apologized after posting an article on their Facebook pages that was replete with antisemitic slurs and racist conspiracy theories. The groups were Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) - UBC and Color Connected Against Racism UBC, both of which deleted the posts following complaints from students on campus.
- 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 antisemitic, 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 antisemitic McMaster SPHR students, the approbation for Hitler expressed by Rawan Qaddoura, Esra Bengizi and Nadera Masad were amongst the most shocking of posts.



*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 November 2017, a self-proclaimed conspiracy theorist associated with an alumni group at University of Toronto 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 March 2017, at York University's Glendon College, antisemitic 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 March 2017, Ryerson University fired teaching assistant Ayman Elkasrawy for provocative antisemitic language while leading a prayer at his mosque. At Masjid Toronto, Elkasrawy allegedly called to "purify the Al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of the Jews."
- In March 2017, administrators at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) began an investigation after a message comparing Jewish people to rodents was posted on a Facebook page honouring an anti-Israel event at the university.
- In February 2017, a student leader at McGill University advocated violence against Jews when encouraging his Twitter followers to "punch a Zionist."
- In February 2017, Campus police at Western University began an investigation after antisemitic pamphlets were circulated on campus. The pamphlets had a one-page letter blaming "Jewish terrorists trained by Israel Zionists" for the shooting rampage that

took place at a Quebec mosque and resulted in the deaths of six people. This incident took place less than three weeks after a bomb threat forced an evacuation of the London Jewish Community Centre.

- In February 2017, the Calgary Sun reported that a dozen posters were found on windows and doors at the University of Calgary – attempting to cast doubt that six million Jewish people were murdered in the Holocaust. The posters asked, “Did the 6 million really die?”

## 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 Antisemitic/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 antisemitism 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 antisemitism 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.

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, who was scheduled to speak at OISE. Bazian is notably a rabble-rousing professor regularly cited for antisemitic 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 antisemitism 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’.<sup>1</sup> The Dean of Toronto’s OISE, Glen A. Jones, was contacted by a concerned OISE alumnus about Bazian’s scheduled talk. Jones’ response was deplorable. He allegedly spent time reviewing the multiple university policy documents on free speech, academic freedom, and antisemitism and racism. These documents can be found on a University of Toronto webpage on freedom of speech.<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://freespeech.utoronto.ca/>

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.

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 antisemitism 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 antisemitism, 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 antisemitism, 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 Antisemitism 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, 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.*

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