

Canadian Parliamentary Committee: Unsubstantiated Assertions on the Rise of Antisemitism in Canada

By [CJPME](#)

Global Research, September 22, 2011
22 September 2011

Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [Religion](#)

Misrepresentation of Testimony and Selective Fact-finding: a CJPME critique of the CPCCA Report on Antisemitism

On July 7, the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (CPCCA) released a report on anti-Semitism in Canada following a 2-year inquiry. CJPME performed a detailed analysis of the CPCCA's findings, especially in light of the testimony given to the CPCCA by law enforcement officials, and university administrators.

Quite disturbingly, in several areas, the CPCCA's report entirely misrepresents or ignores the majority of the most authoritative testimony. CJPME's findings on this and other jarring irregularities with the CPCCA inquiry are summarized in CJPME's critique, "Misrepresentation of Testimony and Selective Fact-finding: A Critique of the Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism."

In light of the fact that just this week, Ministers Baird and Kenney signed the Ottawa Protocol on Combating Antisemitism, the CPCCA's misrepresentation of authoritative testimony is very significant. The signing of the Protocol by Canada is one of the steps suggested by the CPCCA report, and other follow-up steps by the government – including legislative initiatives relating to anti-Semitism and criticism of Israel – are also expected.

The Executive Summary of CJPME's critique is provided below. The full critique is available at this link.

<http://www.cjpme.org/DisplayDocument.aspx?DocumentID=1883&SaveMode=0>

1. On July 7, 2011, the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism ("CPCCA") released the report ("the Report") on its Inquiry, asserting that incidents of antisemitism are on the rise in Canada, particularly on university campuses. The Report selectively discusses some of the testimony and submissions received during the course of the Inquiry – ignoring testimony and submissions that ran counter to its predetermined conclusions – and makes recommendations that, it claims, are necessary to reduce the incidence of antisemitism in Canada.

2. The CPCCA Inquiry received 200 submissions. From these it decided to hear only from selected persons and groups – less than a third of the original 200. In the main these were pro-Israel organizations, Jewish student, religious and community groups and academics (many of whom were from Israel and the US). Groups and individuals who challenged the

assumptions and premises of the CPCCA were, in the main, excluded from the Inquiry's proceedings. This exclusion extended even to a refusal to acknowledge that submissions had even been received from such groups.

3. The CPCCA Inquiry grew out of the inaugural conference of the Inter-parliamentary Committee for Combating Antisemitism ("ICCA") held in London, in February 2009. The ICCA is itself the child of the Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism ("the GFCA"), an agency of the government of Israel. The CPCCA was, in essence, acting for the government of Israel: its funding, despite promises of disclosure on its website, is largely undisclosed. The principal aim of the CPCCA, apparent from its initial news releases, comments made by members of the Inquiry Panel throughout its hearings, and in its final Report, is to widen the definition of antisemitism to include criticism of Israeli government practices and policies, particularly those that have come to be labelled "Israeli Apartheid".

4. Key assertions of the CPCCA Report are entirely unsupported by the most authoritative testimony heard by the Inquiry. Notably:

The assertion that the incidence of antisemitism is on the rise in Canada was not supported by the law enforcement witnesses or by Statistics Canada data. The assertion that antisemitism is on the rise on Canadian campuses was not supported by the testimony of the university administrators who testified to the Inquiry. The CPCCA Report quotes selectively and almost entirely from those witnesses who supported its founding premise – published before the Inquiry had held any hearings.

5. Almost none of the witnesses from Canadian law enforcement agencies who testified before the Inquiry Panel indicated that, with respect to their specific communities, there had been any increase in antisemitic activity, or that antisemitism was a particular problem, more than any other kind of racism.

6. None of the 12 Canadian university administrators who appeared before the Inquiry Panel testified that antisemitism was a problem on their campuses. Many of them opposed any attempt to broaden the definition of antisemitism or to ban Israeli Apartheid Week, citing the importance of encouraging free debate, even on controversial and sensitive topics, within the Canadian academy. Their testimony was almost entirely ignored, disparaged and, in some instances, distorted in the Report to make it appear as if the opposite was the case.

7. The key recommendation of the Report is that the Canadian government and its law enforcement agencies adopt the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia ("EUMC") Working Definition of Antisemitism. This definition, drafted in 2005, has no official status; has been adopted by no government and was, in fact, drafted by a prominent member of an extremist American pro-Israel lobby group, the American Jewish Agency. If adopted, and incorporated in legislation, the Working Definition would effectively outlaw almost any criticism of Israel in Canada.

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