



2010 AUDIT OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS: NATIONAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada has monitored and reported on hate-motivated incidents against the Jewish community in Canada for twenty-nine years. This annual *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents* examines racism and bigotry in this country, as expressed in attacks of harassment, vandalism or violence against individual Jews or the community's institutions. It is cited by government, law enforcement and research agencies around the world as the single most credible study of antisemitism in Canada.

Overview

Incidents were reported across the country in synagogues, schools, playgrounds, campuses, street rallies, sporting events, workplaces, private homes and other residential buildings. Through the Internet, new social networking technologies were used to disseminate vicious slurs against Jews and threats of violence. Antisemitic cyber-bullying was a significant reality. Anti-Israel agitators, far-left-wing groups and radical Islamists, latched onto Nazi motifs and age-old anti-Jewish stereotypes, to bolster their campaigns against the Jewish State, while the far-right-wing camp eagerly embraced anti-Israel propaganda to update its traditional hate material.

The findings that emerge from this *Audit* confirm that antisemitism continues to gain traction. Global influences often supersede purely Canadian triggers of antisemitism and new technologies have provided a convenient and effective vehicle for the dissemination of age-old anti-Jewish messaging in even more sophisticated and insidious ways. With several notable exceptions, the general public appears to be getting desensitized to everyday expressions of antisemitism, while members of the Jewish community appear to have internalized this message, becoming increasingly hesitant to report anti-Jewish incidents.

The Overall Picture

1,306 antisemitic incidents were reported in 2010, representing a 3.3% increase over the 2009 data and indicating that there are specific fault lines in civic interaction when it comes to anti-Jewish prejudice in Canada. From the perspective of the past ten years, there has been more than a four-fold increase in hate-related incidents targeting the Jewish community. When the League released its first Audit 28 years ago, the number of reported incidents was only 63.

The 1,306 incidents across Canada break down as follows: 965 cases of harassment (74% of the total incidents), 317 cases of vandalism (24%) and 24 cases of violence (2%). As in previous years, harassment continues to comprise the majority of cases. Harassment cases increased by 9.2% over 2009, while the other two categories decreased overall. Despite attempts currently in vogue to dismiss harassment as mere harmless name calling, it should be noted that the language used in the cases classified as harassment in this Audit included 80 cases of explicit threats of violence including threats of genocide or imminent harm.

The majority of incidents across Canada consistently occur in Ontario. In 2010, 735 incidents (56.3% of the total) took place in Ontario. This represents an increase for the province of 9.4%, over the 672 incidents reported in 2009.

There were 305 cases reported across the province of Quebec in 2010, representing an 18.2% decrease from the 373 cases reported in 2009, but an increase from 245 incidents reported in Quebec in 2008. Taking into account the annual fluctuations, a five-year view of incidents in Quebec confirms antisemitism is still a concern.

There were 75 cases reported across British Columbia, representing 5.9% of the total incidents recorded across Canada. This represents a small decrease of 6.7% from the 80 cases in 2009, but a five-year view shows a sustained and growing presence of antisemitism in the province.

There were 66 cases reported in Alberta, representing 5.1% of 2010 incidents. Little change was noted from the previous year when 67 cases were reported, but the 2010 data represents a 34% increase over the 50 cases reported in 2008.

There were a total of 19 cases in Saskatchewan, representing 1.5% of the country's total incidents. This is a 58.3% increase over the 12 cases in 2009.

In Manitoba, there were 60 reported cases in 2010, compared to 37 in 2009 and 34 in 2008. The 2010 figure represents a significant increase of 62.2% over the 2009 findings. The Manitoba incidents represent 4.7% of the country's total cases, compared to just 2.9% in 2009.

There were 46 cases in the Atlantic region, representing 3.6% of the total incidents reported across Canada. In 2009, the 23 incidents in this region comprised only 1.8% of the country's total cases.

There were no specific cases reported in the Northern Region, although calls were received indicating residents have concerns about antisemitism.

Trends

There were 32 incidents targeting synagogues in 2010, compared to 50 cases in both 2009 and 2008. This decrease is thought to be in large part due to improved security measures at many Jewish houses of worship, schools and community institutions, which were made possible by matching grants under the Government's Security Infrastructure Program. There were threats to synagogue staff or members, and synagogue members were assaulted on their way home from services. As well, synagogues were targeted right across the country, including Vancouver (BC), Edmonton (AB) Ottawa (ON), London (ON), Toronto (ON) and Montreal (QC).

In 2010, 139 private homes were targeted, up from the 111 private homes targeted in 2009, and 105 in 2008. These cases included harassment by phone, by internet and by mail, in addition to poison pen campaigns, as well as the desecration of *mezuzahs* and other Jewish symbols. Homes and cars parked outside Jewish homes were defaced with swastikas and other ugly messages of hatred.

There were 86 reported cases of antisemitism on university campuses, down from the 137 in 2009, but still up from the 2008 figure of 75 cases. A longer-term comparison notes just 36 reported cases in 2006. The decrease in 2010 can perhaps be explained by increased attention to security issues on campuses. Incidents included ugly graffiti, face-to-face harassment in and out of the classroom, and assaults during or following campus events.

There were 564 reported cases of web-based hate activity with a Canadian connection, whether in terms of content, perpetrators and/or victims, up from the 435 reports in 2009 and the 405 in 2008. The trend towards the abuse of today's new media continued, including hate via blogs, online videos and social networking sites.

There was a spike in the numbers of incidents reported in June 2010, when the "flotilla incident" was a high-profile media story. Strife overseas has traditionally been found to be a trigger for anti-Jewish activity.

The *Audit* urges concerted action, offering recommendations to counter all forms of antisemitism in Canada.

For the full text of the Audit, please visit www.bnaibrith.ca