

**The Canadian
Museum for Human
Rights and Its
“Nakba” Exhibit**

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**BIAS AND ANIMUS IN PROCESS AND OUTCOME
and the NATURE AND IMPACT OF THE NEW
ANTISEMITISM IN CANADA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed “Nakba” exhibit at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), titled “*Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present*,” is not a balanced exploration of displacement. It is a partisan exercise in the demonisation and delegitimisation of Israel, driven from its inception by a process whose composition predetermined its outcome.

A publicly funded national museum exhibiting biased content that vilifies one national/ethnic group’s homeland constitutes a discriminatory denial of equitable human rights education.

The process and work product—to the extent it is already available, are not consistent with the CMHR’s statutory mandate under the Museums Act, the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA), the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism adopted by both Canada and Manitoba, and the ethical codes of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) and International Council of Museums (ICOM).

The bias is structural and traceable. The CMHR assembled a Palestinian Content Advisory Network whose membership remained opaque. It was mentioned once in the 2022–23 annual report and then deleted. Investigation reveals that its members hold views that are hostile to Israel and not sustainable on a fair-minded analysis of history and current realities.

Ramsey Zeid, president of the Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba and member of the Advisory Network, has publicly called Zionism a “*disease that must be destroyed*”¹, accused Israel of genocide², rationalised the October 7 massacre as Palestinians finally being fed up and biting back³, and shared videos which called for violent intifada with language such as “*There is no solution but intifada revolution. Intifada until liberation, or we scorch the earth*”⁴, that same video also “*describes Zionists as ‘demonic’, calls Israel a ‘terrorist foreign entity,’ and urges a coordinated campaign of sabotage targeting city halls, logistics chains, and corporations*”⁵ as described by Pam Fedack in the Winnipeg Sun. Other Advisory Network members have variously framed Israel as an apartheid settler-colonial state. They have endorsed the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, advocated one-state solutions that would deny the right of the Jewish people to their own state, accused Israel of genocide at its founding, and in Gaza today compared Israel to the Nazis. The CMHR cannot credibly claim that work product shaped by this group is free of bias and animus rather than driven by it. By including persons with such views in an official Advisory Committee, it has extended official recognition and an aura of respectability to them.

The process excluded and marginalized the mainstream Jewish community at every stage. There was no public consultation of the kind that accompanied the Holocaust gallery. Due to this exhibit, the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada withdrew its partnership with the CMHR. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) warned that the exhibit would deliver an incomplete and unbalanced narrative that would omit Jewish refugee experiences. The Abraham Global Peace Initiative (AGPI) wrote to the CMHR, the Minister of Canadian

Heritage, and the Prime Minister, requesting suspension of the exhibit.

Jewish organisations that supported the exhibit⁶ are fringe anti-Zionist groups, such as Independent Jewish Voices⁷ (constituting at a maximum 0.2% of Canadian Jews⁸, one report places them around 0.0025% of Canadian Jews), the United Jewish People's Order (expelled by the Canadian Jewish Congress in 1951, and whose membership has never surpassed their 1950s numbers, placing it well below half a percent of Canadian Jews; it seems that their largest attended event in recent years was around 350 people total⁹), and the Jewish Faculty Network (less than 0.05% of Canadian Jews). IJV and UJPO were involved with the organisation that hosted a November 2, 2025, panel at which the exhibit's director discussed her involvement in the exhibit.

The exhibit's content is equally one-sided. The CMHR's potted history, as per its website, attributes Palestinian displacement primarily to Jewish and Israeli armed forces. It does this while omitting critical context: Jewish acceptance of the 1947 UN Partition Plan, repeated Arab rejection of two-state solutions, the invasion by five Arab armies to destroy the nascent Jewish state, over a century of lethal anti-Jewish violence in Mandatory and Ottoman Palestine (documented from at least 1834), the ethnic cleansing of approximately 850,000–900,000 Jews from Arab countries after 1948, and the documented pattern of rejectionist violence against moderate Palestinians who favoured co-existence.

The very term “Nakba”—originally coined to describe the catastrophe of Arab armies' failure to destroy Israel—has been recast to frame Israel's founding as an illegitimate catastrophe, implicitly justifying campaigns to eliminate it. The CMHR exhibit instead insists that “Nakba” refers only to the displacement of Palestinians and avoids acknowledgement of Arab rejection of the two-state solution, of the right of Israel to exist as the Jewish homeland, and of the armed invasion of Israel by the armies of five Arab States aimed at its destruction.

The Museum's diversity policies require representation of multiple perspectives, especially on contested histories. In this case, it would require presenting sources showing that non-violent Palestinian villages

were allowed to stay, along with the inclusion of multiple Arab sources in which Palestinian leadership and Arab States’ leadership called for the evacuation of Arab villages to further the war effort rather than give the nascent State of Israel legitimacy (see Appendix A). Since Israel is an open society, there are multiple lines of scholarship that diverge regarding this period. That is not the case in Arab States, which have not opened their archives. Nor is it the case in the Palestinian Authority, where President Abbas made “Nakba denial” a crime subject to jail terms¹⁰.

The exhibit, as Ramsey Zeid’s own statements make plain, rests on a double game. The exhibit is presented as a collection of individual personal narratives that are merely “*telling stories*” about the effects of displacement. However, the exhibit simultaneously advances “*the story*”, that is supposedly the single historical truth¹¹. The audience is expected to accept these personal narratives as historical fact, even in the context of an Advisory Network whose documented members variously call Zionism a “disease that must be destroyed” or a virus that must “be destroyed” and adopt other epithets that demonize and delegitimize the Jewish state. It is known that oral histories can contain varying degrees of fact and may be coloured by “collective memory”¹². Political perspectives on past events that are widely shared may not fairly or fully reflect the experiences of individual lives. Judging from the composition of the Palestinian Content Advisory Committee, we can expect these stories to be infused with negativity towards Israel and a lack of any historical context.

In practice, we can expect that many or all narratives in this exhibit may be an occasion to vilify Israel, from its foundation until the present. For example, the exhibit may speak of checkpoints without mentioning the suicide bombings that necessitated them, of displacement without mentioning Jewish acceptance of partition and Arab rejection of it, of suffering without acknowledging that it was Arab rejectionism and aggression that created the refugee crisis in the first place.

The “personal story” framing is a shield against accountability: it permits the museum to disseminate a partisan political narrative while disclaiming responsibility for its historical claims. This exhibit will

contribute directly to the rising tide of antisemitism that has made Canada an increasingly dangerous place for its Jewish citizens, as documented in Appendix I of this report.

This selective framing constitutes the “Three Ds” of antisemitism identified by Natan Sharansky and popularised in Canada by former Justice Minister Irwin Cotler: demonisation, double standards applied to Israel, and delegitimisation^{13 14}. It occurs at a time when Jews face the highest per-capita hate-crime targeting of any group in Canada¹⁵. Many Jewish Canadians feel unsafe in their own country, even though both former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and current Prime Minister Mark Carney have publicly affirmed Zionism and Israel’s right to exist and prosper, respectively^{16 17}. Those are the rights that the Advisory Network has dismissed for this exhibit.

The CMHR, in the aftermath of the genocidal attack on Israel in 2023 and the ongoing brutalisation of hostages, allowed an unauthorised pro-Palestinian “die-in” inside the museum. This “die-in” was allowed while the CMHR refused a request from supporters of Israel for a counter demonstration, a disparity that exemplifies the institutional bias at work. Matthew Cutler’s public statements¹⁸ at the time made it unmistakable that the Museum had already promised in secret, without public consultation from the Jewish community, to include an exhibit that focuses on the contested oppression of Palestinians by Israel.

Officials of the CMHR have, on the public record, favoured anti-Israel fringe groups while showing disrespect for the groups that represent the overwhelming majority of Jewish Canadians. The museum has not been transparent with the general public or the mainstream Jewish community. Such actions invite the question of how transparent museum bureaucrats have been with the museum’s own Board of Trustees, who are responsible for fulfilling the museum’s mandate and maintaining its reputation.

The exhibit in its current form must be halted. The CMHR must commission an independent historical review by balanced, credentialed experts. In addition, it must require transparent public consultation,

including meaningful engagement with mainstream Jewish Canadian organisations. The CMHR needs to ensure that the full context of the conflict, along with parallel refugee stories and Arab rejectionism, is included in the exhibit. Finally, the CMHR must conduct a governance audit of curatorial processes to prevent future partisan exhibits.

Proceeding instead risks CHRA complaints, further reputational damage, and continued erosion of public trust in a taxpayer-funded national institution whose mandate is to promote universal human rights, not to serve as a vehicle for the delegitimation of the Jewish state.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CMHR BOARD

Immediately halt the current “Nakba” exhibit in its present form.

Commission an independent historical review by balanced, credentialed experts (including mainstream Jewish and Israeli scholars) to ensure context and accuracy.

Require transparent public consultation, including meaningful engagement with mainstream Jewish Canadian organisations.

Revise the exhibit to include parallel refugee stories (Jewish from Arab lands), Arab rejection of partition/peace offers, and documented patterns of violence against Jews and moderate Palestinians.

Conduct a governance audit of curatorial processes to prevent future partisan influence and ensure alignment with the CMHR Act, CHRA, and IHRA commitments.

Failure to act risks further reputational damage, potential CHRA complaints, and erosion of public trust in a taxpayer-funded national institution charged with promoting universal human rights.

PURPOSE AND MANDATE OF THE CMHR

The purpose of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), as per the Museums Act, is to explore human rights in a manner that “enhances the public’s understanding of human rights, promotes respect for others, and encourages reflection and dialogue”¹.

Key provisions include:

RESPONSIBILITY OF BOARD

- (3) The Board is responsible for the fulfilment of the purposes and the management of the business, activities and affairs of the museum.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

(3) The Director is the chief executive officer of the museum and, under the direction of the Board, has control and supervision of the work and staff of the museum.

RESPONSIBLE TO BOARD

(4) The Director is responsible to the Board for the exercise of the powers, and the performance of the duties and functions of that office and, subject to the by-laws of the museum made pursuant to paragraph 22(f), may attend meetings of the Board or of any committee established by or pursuant to the by-laws.

This board’s mandate is not served by presenting partisan and one-sided exhibits that offer a false and misleading view of history. In this case, the exhibit aims to demonise and delegitimise Israel. The exhibit is not a “balance” to the Holocaust gallery; it is a delegitimising force for the reputation of the museum. There is no reasonable comparison between the systemic extermination of the Jews of Europe and the events of 1948.

The Holocaust exhibit, as revealed in the CMHR’s own description on its website, is already biased against Israel in some respects.

The Holocaust exhibit does not acknowledge historical Arab rejectionism of a Jewish homeland^{2 3}, nor how it contributed to the Holocaust (as Jews could not escape to British Mandatory Palestine)⁴. The exhibit ignores how such rejectionism contributed to the 1947–48 conflict, as the Arab States declared war rather than accepting the UN’s two-state partition plan⁵.

The Holocaust exhibit does not explain that Israel was the safe haven for millions of Jews persecuted and expelled from around the world. Nor does it show that Israel, and its Jewish population, faced a war of annihilation when five Arab States invaded it in 1948. There are many other issues with the Holocaust gallery, including its minimisation of the link between the Holocaust and the creation of the entire post-war

international human rights system—see Johannes Morsink, particularly *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent*⁶ and *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Holocaust: An Endangered Connection*⁷. There is also a lack of acknowledgement of René Cassin, a French Jewish legal scholar and principal drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸.

Of all the tens of millions of people who were displaced during and since WWII, the CMHR has chosen to single out one group and use its suffering to demonise another. Doing so not only excludes other vulnerable groups who could use the exposure, but it is a disservice to the Palestinian people, whose suffering has been used as a political tool. With respect to Israel/Palestine, the selective focus on Palestinians and the condemnation of Israel remains unexplained by anything other than bias in the process. The defence that the exhibit is merely showing “the effect of displacement on human rights” does not explain why it focuses on one people, ignores others, and condemns the Jewish homeland.

Where is the story of the Jewish people, who are by far the longest-standing Indigenous people of Israel, with over three millennia of connection, a continuous presence in the land, and a yearning throughout history to return⁹ ¹⁰?

Why erase the story that the United Nations recognised the right of Jews to their homeland¹¹? That Israel accepted the partition plan, and the original two-state solution, and still Arab armies invaded and attempted to eliminate it, while peace was on the table¹² ¹³?

How would any reader of the exhibit know that Israel fought a heroic war of self-defence in 1948? That it, against all odds, won the war, and lost one percent of its population fighting for its existence¹⁴?

How would they know that even while facing the prospect of that war, Israel, in its Declaration of Independence, welcomed its Arab citizens to stay in peace and be full-fledged citizens¹⁵? It is because of Israel’s founders that today over two million Arabs live in Israel with rights as individual citizens, and as a nationally protected minority. At the same time, while Arabs were being endowed with rights in Israel, the Jewish

people in the surrounding Arab world were ethnically cleansed^{16 17 18}. In 1948, there were around one million Jews who lived in Arab countries; now, due to ethnic cleansing and rampant discrimination, there are almost none left. Where is the story of Jews who could not escape the Holocaust because of the violent Arab opposition to allowing Jewish immigration to British Mandatory Palestine?

Why is the story not told of the Jews who were expelled from the Old City of Jerusalem by invading Arab forces in 1948¹⁹? Jerusalem was supposed to be an international city. Where is the story of Jordan’s Desecration of Jerusalem 1948—1967, in which the remaining Jewish buildings and graveyards were desecrated and destroyed²⁰?

Where is the story of the Druze people who have turned to Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, to protect them from jihadist genocide²¹?

Where is the story of the 1929 Hebron Massacre of the Jews who were then deported from their city after being butchered²²?

Where is the story of the extremist Mufti of Jerusalem using the 1936—1939 Arab revolt to terrorise moderate Palestinian voices? He left the Palestinian society in chaos and disarray, which caused an exodus of Palestinian Arab elite who did not want further conflict. His actions ultimately led to internal chaos, which helped trigger the exodus during the 1948 war²³.

Where is the story of Hajj Amin al-Husseini (the *de facto* leader of pre-1948 Palestinians), allying with Hitler to supervise a continuation of the Holocaust in Mandatory Palestine²⁴? Al-Husseini’s intent was explicit that once the Nazis won the war, he would commit genocide against the Jews in Mandatory Palestine²⁵.

Where is the story of the exploitative treatment and exclusion of Palestinians by their own Arab neighbours? Neighbours who encouraged Palestinians to leave while Arab armies tried to eliminate Israel? Neighbours who denied citizenship to Palestinian Arabs in their own countries when they needed it most^{26 27}? Neighbours who seized the West Bank (Jordan) and Gaza (Egypt)? Why does this exhibit omit that

Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), President of the Palestinian Authority, wrote in 1976²⁸:

“The Arab armies entered Palestine to protect the Palestinians from what they called Zionist tyranny but, instead, abandoned Palestinians forced them to emigrate and leave their homeland imposed upon them a political and ideological blockade and threw them into prisons similar to the ghettos in which Jews used to live in Eastern Europe. The Arab States succeeded in scattering the Palestinian people and in destroying their unity. They did not recognise them as a unified people until the States of the world did so, and this is regrettable”. Mahmoud Abbas, *“What We Have Learned and What We Should Do”*—Falastin el Thawra, official PLO journal, Beirut, (March 1976) as quoted from Richard Lyle to the Scottish Parliament on May 20 2020²⁹.

Where is the story of the expulsion of Palestinians by Kuwait in 1991 (March to September, following the Gulf War and PLO support for Iraq’s invasion)? Approximately 200,000–300,000 Palestinians were expelled, reducing the community to around 20,000–50,000. Kuwait used violence, mass firings, residency revocations, and direct expulsions^{30 31}.

In 1970–1971, during Black September and its aftermath, thousands of Palestinians (including Fedayeen fighters and associated populations) were killed (estimates 3,000–4,000), with tens of thousands displaced or fleeing (primarily to Lebanon and Syria), and PLO forces fully driven out by July 1971^{32 33}.

Where is the success story of Palestinian Arabs, now numbering about two million who live in Israel as citizens, enjoying the highest life expectancy of any Arab population and full rights in Israeli democracy³⁴?

Why is the impression given that Arab Palestinian culture has no home in Israel itself, where Arabs have extensive educational and cultural rights as a national minority?

Why is the story of the ethnic cleansing of Jews from Arab lands after

the 1948 war not told? Why is there no mention of almost a million Jews (~850,000–900,000) fleeing to Israel without their possessions due to Arab harassment, persecution, and expulsions^{35 36}?

Where are the stories of the Arab villages that entered into pacts with the nascent State of Israel to be peaceful and not allow fighting from their villages? They were allowed to stay in the State of Israel, which is why there are over 2.1 million Arab citizens of Israel³⁷.

Why does the CMHR keep up the pretence of just presenting stories, when its potted history will not mention the Jewish acceptance of the two-state solution from the outset, and the repeated Arab and Palestinian rejection of peace offers by Israel^{38 39 40 41 42 43 44}?

Why is the CMHR committing to a “historical” statement that attributes the displacement of Palestinians primarily to Jewish armed forces? Where is the truth that the Jewish leadership accepted the existence of a Palestinian state under the UN partition plan, and the Palestinians and Arabs generally rejected the Jewish state and tried to destroy it violently? Why is it that when Israel’s declaration of independence called for Arabs to stay in Israel with equal civil rights, while Arab neighbouring states attempted the annihilation of Israel, the CMHR does not include it in their exhibit?

Why does the CMHR say it is not exploring history, just telling stories, when it presents a brief, tendentious summary of the Middle East conflict that places blame squarely on Israel?

Based on what has been seen so far, we can expect the public will not be told of the repeated Palestinian rejection of Israeli peace offers and the launching of waves of terror in response to some of them.

We can expect the public will not be told that Israel left Gaza in 2005 without imposing a naval or economic blockade at the time of withdrawal, until the territory was violently taken over by Hamas, which for decades diverted humanitarian and development aid into building tunnels and rockets.

ADDITIONAL CHAPTER SOURCES:^{45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52}

2

LEGAL DUTY UNDER THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The CMHR, as a federal Crown corporation, is subject to the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA), which prohibits discrimination on grounds such as religion, ethnic origin, and national origin. The proposed exhibit violates these provisions by its selective lack of consultation with the mainstream Jewish community, and the presentation already on the CMHR's website, and its public statements of a one-sided narrative that disproportionately targets and delegitimises Israel and, by extension, the Jewish people's right to self-determination in their homeland.

The CMHR's conduct contributes to a poisoned atmosphere for Jewish visitors and staff, contravening the CHRA's duty to ensure equal access and non-discriminatory programming in federally regulated institutions. Under section 5 of the CHRA (denial of goods, services, facilities on prohibited grounds¹), a publicly funded national museum exhibiting biased content that vilifies one national/ethnic group's homeland constitutes discriminatory denial of equitable human rights education.

The CMHR's enabling legislation (the Canadian Museum for Human Rights Act) requires it to "enhance the public's understanding of human rights" in a manner consistent with Canadian values, including multiculturalism and respect for diverse identities. A partisan and vilifying exhibit undermines this statutory purpose and exposes the institution to potential CHRA complaints.

3

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The CMHR Board of Trustees bears fiduciary duties under the Crown corporation framework and general principles of governance to act in the best interests of the institution, Canadians, and the public trust. Approving or proceeding with a demonstrably unbalanced exhibit without broad, transparent consultation breaches these duties. Key concerns of ours include: a lack of due diligence in assessing the risks of bias; antisemitism allegations; reputational harm; failure to ensure exhibit content aligns with the museum's mandate for dialogue and reflection rather than partisan advocacy; and inadequate oversight of curatorial processes that appear influenced by partisan advisory inputs.

Public accountability demands transparency in decision-making, especially for controversial topics. The apparent deletion of Advisory Network references from annual reports and the refusal to engage meaningfully with mainstream Jewish organisations suggest a governance failure.

The Board should demand an independent review (e.g., by external historians or human rights experts) before approval, or risk liability for breaching fiduciary standards of care, loyalty, and good faith. As a taxpayer-funded entity, the CMHR owes Canadians balanced, evidence-based programming—not selective narratives that erode public confidence.

4

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The CMHR publicly claims to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), yet the exhibit's content and process contradict these principles. Diversity requires representing multiple perspectives, especially on contested histories; inclusion means meaningful consultation of affected communities. Mainstream Jewish Canadians (the vast majority of whom view Israel as central to Jewish identity and safety^{1 2}) have been largely excluded from input. In contrast, fringe anti-Zionist voices (e.g., Independent Jewish Voices) are anointed. Such an application of DEI is not genuine inclusion but selective amplification of one fringe narrative at the expense of the beliefs of the majority of Canadian Jews in a form that is misleadingly hostile.

True inclusion would feature comparative displacement stories, contextual origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict (including UN partition acceptance by Jews and rejection by Arabs), and balanced scholarly input. The current approach fails this standard and undermines the museum's role as a bridge for diverse Canadian identities.

5

IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

The governments of Canada and Manitoba have adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism and committed to educational efforts to promote its understanding. Canada adopted IHRA in 2019, and Manitoba adopted IHRA on October 27, 2022¹.

The proposed Nakba exhibit demonises and delegitimises Israel by implying that the entirety of the region that constituted Mandatory Palestine belongs inherently to Arabs and Muslims. It also suggests that the Jewish people do not have their own rights to self-determination and self-defence, as recognised by international law and the United Nations. These implicit ideals provide an implied justification for political and armed campaigns to wipe out Israel.

As Appendix B documents, various members of the Palestinian Content Advisory Network have at times publicly called Israel an apartheid state, accused it of genocide at its founding and in modern times, claimed that in 1948 Israel “exterminated” most of its Arab population, and characterised it as a “colonial settler” state. These Advisory Network members have variously referred to Zionism as a “virus” that needs to be “destroyed”. Such contentions are not only false and ahistorical, but in many cases have the hallmarks of “new” as well as traditional antisemitism. “New” antisemitism pretends to demonise “Zionism” (the belief that Israel has the right to exist as a state that is the homeland of the Jewish people) along with Israel, while not being hostile to Jews (see Appendix C). In reality, it is attacking the Jewish people through the State of Israel. The IHRA definition of antisemitism identifies the following as potentially antisemitic²:

- Denying the Jewish people their right of self-determination.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

6

ETHICAL CODES AND MUSEUM ASSOCIATIONS

The CMHR subscribes to the ethical standards of bodies such as the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which emphasise accuracy, balance, transparency, and the avoidance of partisanship in exhibitions. CMA's Ethical Guidelines stress that museums must “*present diverse points of view*” and “*avoid bias or prejudice*”. ICOM's Code of Ethics requires museums to “*ensure that collections in their care are not used to promote... political agendas*” and to foster “*critical dialogue*”¹. The proposed exhibit's uncritical use of the

term “Nakba” (a term laden with political connotation implying Israel’s founding was a catastrophe), reliance on partisan oral histories without counterbalancing evidence, and exclusion of mainstream Jewish/Israeli perspectives violate these codes. The lack of public consultation (which was present for the creation of the Holocaust gallery) and the opaque selection of Advisory Network members further breach transparency ethics. Continuing with an exhibit that has been tainted by viciously anti-Israeli statements from advisors risks reputational damage and ethical non-compliance. The museum should adhere to best practices: peer review by balanced experts, full disclosure of sources/advisors, and mechanisms for public feedback before finalisation.

Ramsey Zeid (one such member of the Advisory Network) has stated that the exhibit is “*by Palestinians for Palestinians*”². The reality is that not all Palestinian Arabs, in or outside of Israel, are anti-Israel rejectionists. Rejectionism can be defined as the view that Israel does not have the right to exist and that Arab people and their states should not make peace with it or negotiate with it^{3 4}. This should not be a position that a national museum should adopt or endorse.

Such rejectionism is not the view of many Muslims and Arabs, as demonstrated by the Arab countries that have signed peace agreements with Israel, such as Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan. No museum exhibit should be the partisan project and platform of any ideological group, let alone one that is fraught with demonisation of other people and their homelands. Every exhibit of a national cultural institution should aim to be fair-minded about the past and present. It should be positive about peaceful co-existence, respect among nations, and it should be researched and presented in a manner that does not present bias as fact, which would be at best highly contestable and at worst a hostile falsification or evasion of truth.

PROCESS AND ANIMUS IN EXHIBIT CREATION

The process of creating this exhibit has been rife with animus toward Israel and Jews from the start, including:

Behind-the-scenes promises by the CMHR—by whom and to whom the museum has never disclosed—to present an exhibit that casts Israel in a negative light.

Exclusion of mainstream Jewish perspectives, narratives, information, and input from those who believe Israel has a right to exist¹.

Selection of an Advisory Network that is rife with fundamental negativity towards Israel.

Exclusion of the Museum's own staff. There were experts with extensive backgrounds in the history of the Jewish people, the Holocaust, and the Middle East. Were they excluded because they have some sympathy for Israel?

Has there been any consultation with knowledgeable, reasonable, impartial historians on displacements from the mid-20th century onwards?

The agenda of the CMHR supporting a partisan and negative portrayal of Israel has been clear for several years now, although the actual origin has never been transparent.

When preparing the Holocaust gallery, a national consultation was held. In contrast, with the Nakba exhibit (which critics argue undermines the Holocaust gallery), there appears to have been a long process of side consultations with no public consultation, and no opportunity for contribution from supporters of Israel's right to exist. There seems to have been no opportunity for knowledgeable and balanced historians, or representatives of other displaced groups from the Middle East (Druze, Kurds, Christians, and so on) to have given their input.

Rather, there were backroom deals from the start. In December 2023, a group of pro-Palestinian activists entered the CMHR without authorisation and performed a "die-in" protest. When supporters of Israel took the proper route and asked for authorisation to do a counter-demonstration, they were refused². The bias and discrimination could not be more blatant, and these problems extend further. Matthew Cutler (CMHR's vice president of exhibitions) announced that the museum had agreed years earlier to mount an exhibit showcasing the daily indignities in the lives of Palestinians. The focus would be on Palestinian victimhood and alleged Israeli fault. That would be nothing like a balanced perspective, especially in light of the genocidal massacre of Jews by Hamas on

October 7, 2023, which was the deadliest single attack on Jewish civilians since the Holocaust. In a statement to *The Art Newspaper* (December 10, 2023), Cutler confirmed the museum had been working with the Palestinian-Canadian community on a new gallery content that predated the war entirely: “*This is a commitment we made long before the start of the Israel-Hamas War, and it will continue long after this current conflict ends*”³. The CMHR has worked with an “Advisory” network of supporters for the Palestinian cause (referred to as the Palestinian Content Advisory Network). There is still no transparency for the public or the Board of Trustees about how this group was chosen. It is not clear that even the Board was informed of how it was chosen, who is on it, or what their records are of political bias towards Israel.

The only time the Advisory Network’s membership was mentioned in an annual report was in 2023⁴. Why not since? Did the executive leaders not want the public or the Board to know who was in the group? Given the inflammatory and extreme public record statements of many Advisory Network members, why did the museum leadership continue working with this network? Would that not thereby legitimise these radicalist views and allow them to influence the perception, and no doubt the content of the exhibit?

Upon investigation, the documented views of many members of the group are deeply troubling.

Ramsey Zeid, president of the Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba (CPAM), is a member of the Advisory Committee. Direct quotes from him include calling “*Zionism a disease that must be destroyed*”^{5 6}.

On Oct 21, 2024, CPAM (of which Zeid is the President) made a post admiring Yahya Sinwar, the mastermind behind the Oct 7, 2023, terrorist attacks that slaughtered innocent civilians, including Canadian citizens. In the post, Zeid wrote that Sinwar was the “*resistance leader*” and that “*he stood with his people, embodying the spirit of resistance*”⁷. Zeid made another post that said, “*Stop Condemning Oct 7*”. On Oct 14, 2024, Zeid wrote, “*ZIONISM MUST BE DESTROYED !!ZIONISM IS*

THE ROOT OF ALL PROBLEMS IN PALESTINE IN THE MIDDLE EAST”⁸. In addition, he posted on his Facebook account CPAM a photo of Hassan Nasrallah, who was the head of the terrorist organisation Hezbollah, with the caption “*We shall continue on this path even if we are all killed, even if your homes and destroyed over our heads; we will never let go of the Islamic resistance*”⁹.

Spivak, Editor of the Winnipeg Jewish Review, referred to several of these posts in an email to Isha Khan and Rorie McLeod of the CMHR on March 3, 2025, so that the CMHR’s leadership would be aware of Zeid’s posts¹⁰.

Prof Nahla Abdo, a member of the Advisory Network, said during a podcast in 2021 “*Zionism is one such virus, it is different from the white European settler colonial project, not because it is not white and European in origin, nor because it is not settler colonialism, Zionist colonialism is different because it used and uses a particular ideology, namely Jewishness as a deception and political shield for its colonial project*”¹¹. On another Podcast from Oct 26, 2023, she said that in 1948, “*They [Jews] exterminated 75-80% of Palestinians*”¹², as well as “*Resistance and Resistance is the only means*”¹³. She appeared on an IJV YouTube video in 2017 where she stated when talking about Israel, “*You know, we are dealing with a very, you know it’s a fascist state altogether, and we have to be really clear about this*”¹⁴.

The Canadian government has at times shown sensitivity to perceived anti-Israel bias in senior federal appointments. In August 2024, Birju Dattani resigned as the incoming Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission before taking office¹⁵. His resignation followed complaints by Jewish advocacy groups about social media posts from 2014–2015, which included, amongst other things, sharing an article titled “*Palestinians are Warsaw Ghetto Prisoners of Today*”. Dattani stated that he shared the article “*to generate conversation*” and that he did not agree with it. He also served as a panellist on Israel/Palestine topics. An independent legal investigation by Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti found no evidence of antisemitism, stating: “*We*

cannot find that Mr. Dattani harboured or harbours any beliefs that would be characterized as anti-Semitic". Justice Minister Arif Virani nonetheless accepted his resignation, citing concerns about how Dattani had "deliberately de-emphasised" his Israel-critical scholarship during vetting¹⁶.

8

CONTEMPTUOUS TREATMENT OF MAINSTREAM JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Core parts of classical antisemitism include references to Jews as a “*disease*” worthy of “*elimination*”¹. To understand how it has morphed into modern antisemitism, one must understand Zionism. Zionism is the belief that the Jewish people have the right to self-determination, including the right to a state². “New antisemitism” tends to characterise Zionism as inherently racist, or as a “*disease*” worthy of elimination. These characterisations are not accidental; they echo classical antisemitism and preserve it. Any such characterisations should be beyond the

pale of any legitimate discussion.

Why is the CMHR legitimising such hate-filled views by including people who hold them on an official Advisory Committee? The Advisory Committee is filled with individuals who have expressed extreme negativity and bias toward Israel. It is unacceptable that the CMHR pretends the Museum's work product is free of such animus while it is shaped by it.

The vast majority of Canadian Jews support Israel's right to exist³. In addition, so do many non-Jews, including Christians, Muslims⁴, people of other faiths, and people with no religious beliefs. There was never anything approaching meaningful consultation with mainstream Jewish groups. The CMHR is employing what critics call the "Jew-washing" technique⁵. Jew-washing is a practice of claiming legitimacy for extreme anti-Israel views by citing the support of fringe organisations that claim Jewish provenance, but who represent a negligible fraction of the community. Independent Jewish Voices Canada (IJV) has a small fraction of Canadian Jews as members. According to a 2024 report in Vashti Media, IJV membership hovered around 1,000 just before October 2023, representing well under 1% of Canadian Jews⁶. IJV's extreme hostility towards Israel has led many to call it antisemitic—as documented in the Winnipeg Jewish community's own press, including by Henry Srebrnik in the *Jewish Post and News*⁷. Others have stated that it is neither Jewish nor for peace⁸. On November 2, 2025, the Director of Research and Exhibition Development for the CMHR stated from the floor of a public panel called "*Jews and Israel: Which Way Forward?*" that she was working on the Nakba exhibit⁹. The event took place at Merchants Corner in Winnipeg and was organised and hosted by the United Jewish People's Order (UJPO). UJPO is an anti-Zionist, secular socialist organisation from which mainstream Canadian Jewish institutions severed ties decades ago¹⁰. The Canadian Jewish Congress expelled UJPO in 1951. In 2011, the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Canadian Jewish Congress again cut off relations with UJPO's Winchevsky Centre after it hosted an event featuring a member of the

International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network¹¹. UJPO’s own website documents its members’ participation in Free Palestine rallies and protests outside Winnipeg synagogues, along with campaigns for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel. Other organisations on the Nov 2, 2025, panel, such as Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) and Manitoba Friends of Standing Together, both share UJPO’s anti-Zionist orientation. Harold Shuster, who represented IJV at the event, is identified on the IJV website as a member of its BDS Committee¹².

When the Nakba exhibit was formally announced in November 2025, it triggered immediate opposition from the organisations that actually represent the overwhelming majority of Canadian Jews. The Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada (JHCWC) withdrew its partnership with the CMHR, including from Holocaust Remembrance Day programming¹³. The executive director of JHCWC, Belle Jarniewski, stated that “*the decision was based on the CMHR’s lack of consultation with the organized Jewish community*”¹⁴. The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) publicly challenged the museum, warning the exhibit would “*deliver an incomplete and unbalanced narrative, one that omits Jewish refugee*” experiences from 1948¹⁵. The Abraham Global Peace Initiative (AGPI) wrote to the CMHR’s chief executive, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, and the Prime Minister, requesting that the exhibit be suspended¹⁶. Tellingly, the only Jewish organisations that expressed support for the exhibit were the same fringe groups that organised the November 2 panel: IJV, UJPO, and the Jewish Faculty Network¹⁷.

David Bernstein’s book, *Woke Antisemitism: How a Progressive Ideology Harms Jews*¹⁸, demonstrates meticulously and exhaustively the devastating harm that leftist “woke” ideology has wrought by dividing the world into the privileged and oppressed. In addition, it packages Jews into an easily digestible framework by labelling Jews as “*white*” and “*privileged*”; this has inflicted massive damage on the Jewish people.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism as official government policy and warned against the three D’s of antisemitism: demonisation, double standards, and delegitimation

of Israel¹⁹. In a 2015 interview, Trudeau stated, *“I’m opposed to the BDS movement. I think that it’s an example of the new form of anti-Semitism in the world, as Irwin Cotler points out, an example of the three ‘Ds’: demonization of Israel, delegitimization of Israel, and double standard applied toward Israel”*²⁰. Shortly before leaving office, Trudeau also publicly declared himself a Zionist, stating at the National Forum on Combating Antisemitism on March 8, 2025: *“No one in Canada should ever be afraid to call themselves a Zionist. I am a Zionist”*²¹.

Prime Minister Mark Carney, in June 2025, described his vision for peace as *“a lasting peace in the Middle East ... that takes into account Gaza and West Bank and effectively working on a path to a Palestinian state? I would agree with all of those...(Palestinians) living side by side in security with Israel—a Zionist, if you will, Palestinian state that recognizes the right of Israel not just to exist, but to prosper and not live in fear—we can’t have peace unless we move towards that”*²².

The CMHR instead has adopted a biased process aimed at a biased outcome that betrays its mandate, the Human Rights Code, museum ethics, and contributes to the hatred that has made many Jewish Canadians feel unsafe in this country.

The wrongs committed here cannot be fixed by “tweaks”. The CMHR has, as David Asper puts it, been turned into a *“dupe”* for one side²³.

The exhibit in its current form needs to be stopped. The CMHR needs to start over, without its anti-Jewish bias, without its distortion of history, without its Jew-washing as a substitute for genuine consultation with the mainstream and self-affirming Jewish community and other supporters of Israel.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Historians on Arab Leaders' Calls for Arabs to Leave During the 1948 War and the Attempted Elimination of Israel

These sources argue that the primary causes of the 1948 Palestinian displacement (Nakba) were: Arab rejection of the UN Partition Plan, the civil war initiated by Arab forces in November 1947, calls by Arab leaders for temporary evacuation, war-induced panic and chaos, and the May 1948 invasion by Arab armies, rather than a systematic policy of expulsion by Israel as the main driver.

BENNY MORRIS, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). Morris analyses declassified documents and concludes that most Arabs who fled the war did so due to chaos, fear from Arab-initiated fighting, and propaganda, not due to a blanket Israeli expulsion plan¹.

EFRAIM KARSH, *Palestine Betrayed* (Yale University Press, 2010). Karsh blames Arab leaders (e.g., al-Husseini) for rejectionism, incitement, and urging of evacuations to facilitate an Arab invasion. The presence of Palestinians who stayed unharmed even when encountering the IDF proves that no systematic policy was in place to deport peaceful Palestinians².

YOAV GELBER, *Palestine 1948: War, Escape and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (Sussex Academic Press, 2006). Gelber cites Arab sources that encouraged locals to temporarily flee until the war was over³.

EFRAIM KARSH, *Fabricating Israeli History: The 'New Historians'* (Frank Cass, 2000). Karsh critiques the overemphasis on Israeli blame for the cycle of violence surrounding 1948, and highlights Arab rejection and invasion as root causes⁴.

MITCHELL G. BARD, *Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2012). Bard documents Arab leaders' flight urgings and partition rejection as a self-inflicted crisis⁵.

JOSEPH B. SCHECHTMAN, *The Arab Refugee Problem* (Philosophical Library, 1952). Schechtman's early analysis of Arab radio appeals to evacuate for military reasons⁶.

HOWARD M. SACHAR, *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time* (Penguin Random House, 2007). Sachar attributes the flight of Palestinians to Arab-initiated war, chaos, and exaggerated propaganda.⁷

MARTIN GILBERT, *Israel: A History* (Black Swan, 2008). Gilbert emphasises that Arab broadcasts and invasion fears were the primary motivators for Palestinians fleeing⁸.

AHRON BREGMAN, *Israel's Wars: A History Since 1947* (Routledge, 2016). Bregman lays out that the 1948 war was indeed a defensive war for Israel⁹.

EFRAIM KARSH, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Palestine War 1948* (Osprey Publishing, 2002). Karsh reviews military history showing Arab responsibility for the 1948 war¹⁰.

EFRAIM KARSH, “1948, Israel, and the Palestinians—*The True Story*” (Commentary Magazine, May 2008). Karsh describes how Arab archives show rejection and invasion as causes of the 1948 war¹¹.

BENNY MORRIS, “*The Causes and Character of the Arab Exodus from Palestine: The Israel Defense Forces Intelligence Branch Analysis of June 1948*” (Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1986). Morris goes through IDF intelligence’s analysis to show that the causes of the Arab exodus from Israel were primarily fear and Arab attacks¹².

YOAV GELBER, “*Why Did the Palestinians Run Away in 1948?*” (History News Network, George Washington University). Gelber contextualises the blame of the suffering on the Palestinians, “*They have been victims—but of their own follies and pugnacity, as well as of their Arab allies’ incompetence*”¹³.

SOL STERN, “*The Truth Behind the Palestinian ‘Catastrophe’*” (Commentary Magazine, March 2023). Stern argues that the catastrophe was self-inflicted by Arab aggression¹⁴.

AVRAHAM SELA, “*Arab Historiography of the 1948 War: The Quest for Legitimacy*” (New Perspectives on Israeli History, 1991). Sela shows how Arabs acknowledge their own failures in the war¹⁵.

“*Nakba-Nonsense*”, Erez Tadmor and Erel Segal. Karsh states in this document, “*The myth of the Nakba is a bluff. It’s an enormous lie which is meant to undermine the international recognition of Israel’s right to exist within secure and defensible borders. It is meant to criminalize Israel and to frame Israel of*

*having perpetrated a crime which it did not commit. It's an attempt to shirk the responsibility of the Arabs for the results of their own aggression and to whitewash the crimes of the Palestinian national movement with the aim of justifying its struggle to destroy Israel*¹⁶.

Note on Efraim Karsh: Karsh's research is unique among historians of the 1948 conflict in its extensive use of recently declassified British Mandate-era archives. Millions of documents from the period 1920–1948 that were previously inaccessible to earlier generations of scholars have been analysed, revealing that much information was either ignored or distorted by Israel's revisionist “new historians”. Drawing on British, Arab, Israeli, UN, and Soviet sources, Karsh's work—particularly *Palestine Betrayed* (Yale University Press, 2010) and “1948, Israel, and the Palestinians—*The True Story*” (Commentary, May 2008)—demonstrates that the claim of deliberate Zionist dispossession of Palestinian Arabs is not only unfounded but the inverse of the truth. His archival research shows that it was Palestinian Arab leaders who, from the early 1920s onward, oftentimes against the wishes of their own constituents, launched a relentless campaign to destroy the Jewish national revival movement. This campaign culminated in the violent attempt to abort the 1947 UN partition plan. Had Arab leaders accepted partition, there would have been no war and no displacement.

ANITA SHAPIRA, “*The Past Is Not a Foreign Country: The Failure of Israel's New Historians' to Explain the Jewish Past*” (The New Republic, December 2000). Shapira critiques the “new historians” faulty methodologies and portrays them as ideological iconoclasts¹⁷.

BENNY MORRIS, “*Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948*” (The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948, Cambridge University Press, 2007). Morris discusses how new archival information calls for a re-examination of previous ideas; he supports the idea that the flight of Arabs was a product of war and not a premeditated plan¹⁸.

EFRAIM KARSH, “*The Palestinians and the ‘Right of Return’*” (Commentary Magazine, May 2001). Karsh states, “*Even before the outbreak of hostilities, many of them had already fled their homes. Still larger numbers left before war reached their doorstep*”. In reference to the Arabs who fled during the 1948 war of independence¹⁹.

RAPHAEL ISRAELI, “*Raphael Israeli on The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, by Ilan Pappé*” (Jewish Political Studies Review, 2008). Alice in Ethnic Cleansing Land: The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, by Ilan Pappé, Reviewed by Raphael Israeli²⁰.

OREN KESSLER, *Palestine 1936: The Great Revolt and the Roots of the Middle East Conflict*. (Bloomsbury Publishing 2025)²¹.

SETH J. FRANTZMAN, “*The ‘Nakba’ Narrative: A History of Deception*” (The Algemeiner, May 2023). Frantzman asserts that the Nakba is a propaganda-driven narrative and that the actual causes of the displacement of Palestinians were Arab rejection and defeat²².

ARYEH L AVNERI, *The claim of dispossession: Jewish land-settlement and the Arabs, 1878-1948* (New Brunswick, [N.J.] USA: Transaction Books, 1984)²³.

MORDECHAI BAR-ON, *Cleansing history of its content: Some critical comments on Ilan Pappé’s The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, (Journal of Israeli History: Politics, Society, Culture, 2008)²⁴.

There is room for legitimate investigation and debate about all the events of the 1947-48 war. However, it is historical disenfranchisement for the museum to pretend it is merely telling "personal stories" when it frames them in a context that casts the predominant blame on Israel. The exhibit makes no mention of Arab rejectionism and attempted destruction of Israel, or the violence that was inflicted on Jews before, during, and after the 1947-48 conflict. This omission is an intentional attempt to sever the connection between historical context and lived experiences. There is no reason to expect that accounts of events such as security checks will mention that their origin lies in terrorist attacks. It is to be presumed that there will be no mention of Israel making repeated offers to the Palestinians of comprehensive peace deals, or that Israel left Gaza entirely in 2005, with no blockade in place at the time of withdrawal. After giving Gaza to the Palestinians to rule as they saw fit, Israel watched as the territory was violently taken over by a genocidal terrorist organisation known as Hamas, which has since diverted billions of dollars in aid to building weapons^{25 26}. It is a fair assumption that none of these facts will be included along with the CMHR's "stories".

The CMHR also fails to address that personal stories may be influenced by collective memory, such as a shared political view that Israel is illegitimate, and that all of Israel's territory is "occupied land". "Collective memory" may omit Arab pogroms against Jews prior to the creation of the State of Israel. It may forget that Israel accepted the partition plan and the creation of a Palestinian state, something the Arab leaders did not agree to. "Collective memory" would ignore that Arab factions attacked moderate Arabs who preferred co-existence, that Arab States attacked Israel at its inception and took over the Palestinian territories outside of Israel.

A note on Benny Morris: he is an Israeli historian who has attempted to document the reality of Palestinian displacement in 1948 objectively, and who simultaneously refuses to condemn it. His core scholarly finding, consistent across all his major works, is that there was no master plan or top-down Israeli policy of ethnic cleansing. As he wrote in the

conclusion to the original *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem: the exodus* “was born of war, not by design, Jewish or Arab... largely a by-product of Arab and Jewish fears and of the protracted, bitter fighting”²⁷. Most of the displacement, in his account, resulted from the chaos of a war initiated by Arab forces. It began with the rejection of the UN Partition Plan in November 1947, the civil war that Arab militias launched immediately after, and the invasion by five Arab armies in May 1948. Morris is emphatic that without Arab rejectionism and that invasion, there would have been no refugee crisis, and that a Jewish state and a Palestinian state would have come into existence side by side as the UN intended.

In his article titled *The Liar as Hero*, Benny Morris wrote, “At best, Ilan Pappé [the “go-to” source for demonizing Israel’s founding] must be one of the world’s sloppiest historians; at worst, one of the most dishonest. In truth, he probably merits a place somewhere between the two”²⁸. Morris then describes the quality of Pappé’s translation of critical texts included in the book (*The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, by Ilan Pappé) as “So there can be no escaping the conclusion that Pappé introduced the subject, and perverted the text, for one purpose only: to blacken the image of Israel and its leaders in 1948. This is also among the purposes of *The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian Dynasty and Out of the Frame*”²⁹.

Morris seems to have done his best as a conscientious academic and historian to fairly document and assess the facts of this complex historical period. He does identify specific acts of expulsion and violence on the Israeli side, and an anxious follow-up action by some local Israeli commanders to move Arab communities to the other side of the battle lines rather than leave them behind Israeli lines during an existential war. These are actions he treats as tactically driven rather than evidence of a systematic policy.

An overall observation about historiography in the area: Israel is an open society, and historians, including leftists who are one-sidedly hostile to the national project, are free to present their views. The Arab States have not opened their archives on this historical period;

they are not democracies, and they limit the free speech of their own people. As of 2023, the Palestinian Authority has made "Nakba denial" a criminal offence³⁰.

In contemporary debates about the past, present, and future, Jewish tradition has always been marked by openness to debate and self-criticism. There are indeed Jews who have gone beyond fair-minded self-scrutiny and adopted new quasi-religions like woke antisemitism. Such shifts may in part result from individuals within an embattled community seeking to demonstrate that they have transcended the roots of their unfairly threatened people and homeland. However, that reality does not justify the cynicism of "Jew-washing", whereby an anti-Israel fragment of the Jewish community is used to legitimate the demonisation of Israel and the distortion of historical realities.

APPENDIX B

Summary of Statements by Members of the Palestinian Content Advisory Network Demonstrating Hostility to Israel

The following summarises publicly available statements and positions from the members of the Palestinian Content Advisory Network (as referenced in the CMHR 2022-23 Annual Report¹). These include accusations of apartheid, genocide, rejection of the two-state solution, or other positions that indicate hostility to Israel's existence as a Jewish state or its legitimacy. Where possible, direct sources and URLs are provided for the statements (based on publicly accessible articles, interviews, books, and reports). Summaries are based on verified public records.

Abigail Bakan (Toronto, Ontario) supports BDS because it is “*aimed at challenging the Israeli state’s illegal military occupation*” and because it is a “*challenge to the hegemonic place of Zionism*”². Bakan is the author of another book with Yasmeen Abu-Laban, who is also on the CMHR Palestinian Advisory Network, entitled *Israel, Palestine and the Politics of Race*. The book calls for a future “*one state*” as a “*post apartheid reality*”³.

On the origins and falsehood of the “apartheid” slander, please see Appendix M. The “*one state*” solution would mean that while the number of Muslim and Arab States in the world would remain at over fifty, none of which are democracies, and none of them has more than a small fraction of their Jewish population from 1948. A one-state solution that excludes Israel would ensure that Jews would have no place at all in which to exercise their right of self-determination in the form of statehood.

Shortly following the 7th of October 2023 attacks by Hamas on Israel, Professor Bakan was the fourth signee of an open letter which said ^{4 5 6},

"We reject the notion that it is antisemitic, hateful, or illegitimate to contextualize the October 7th, 2023 attack. Similarly, we reject the notion that it is antisemitic, hateful, or illegitimate to express support for Palestinians in the face of ongoing Israeli apartheid and genocide. This is legitimate Charter-protected political expression. This speech echoes the United Nation's Secretary General (the October 7th attack "did not happen in a vacuum"), the Executive Director of Jewish Voice for Peace ("The Israeli government has lost any semblance of humanity as they wage a genocide against the people living in Gaza"), and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions affirming the right of the Palestinians to resist their demise (UNGA Resolution 45/130 (1990); Resolution 37/43 (1982); Resolution 3314 (1974))".

In her book *Israel, Palestine and the Politics of Race* (2019), she has stated the following ⁷,

"Israel was established at the end of the Second World War in response to the racialized genocide of Jews in Europe under the Nazi regime in Germany".

"...rendering the Indigenous Palestinian population invisible..."

"the moment of establishment of Israel, projected and memorialized in the Zionist narrative as an achievement of "independence" from the period of the British Mandate, is the Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe".

Diana Abouali (Dearborn, Michigan) has published statements, such as *"...not only because of the genocidal nature of Israel's violence against Palestinians..."*, *"We issued a statement on 9 October in which we unequivocally stood in solidarity with the people of Palestine against*

*Israel's indiscriminate carpet bombing of civilian areas in the Gaza Strip*⁸. Notably, such a condemnation would have been in reference to Oct 9th, 2023. As this article was published in August 2024, the condemnation of Israel was published just two days after Hamas's attack. Diana Abouali is the director of the Arab American National Museum (AANM).

Idris El-Bakri (Winnipeg, Manitoba) is on record, according to B'nai Brith Canada, as having participated in a panel called My Jerusalem: Responding to the U.S. Embassy Announcement, which took place at the University of Winnipeg on the 28th of February 2018. At the panel, he made the following comment,

*"Elbakri tarred indigenous Israeli Jews as European settlers and suggested that Jewish self-determination in their ancestral lands does not make sense in the "Arab Middle East"*⁹.

He is also on record as stating, *"Do we want an ethnic enclave? What's being called for is basically an ethnic enclave in the middle in the Arab Middle East for Jews only"* during the same event¹⁰.

Nahla Abdo (Ottawa, Ontario; Carleton University professor) does not acknowledge the Jewish right to self-determination; instead, she favours a "one state" solution¹¹. She also refers to Israel and its history as such,

*"This article explores the development of capitalism in Palestine under British colonialism and the Zionist settler colonial project. It examines first, Israel's internal and external capitalist dynamism, including its treatment of its non-European citizens, namely indigenous Palestinians, and non-Ashkenazi (Arab) Jewish settlers". "Racial Capitalism: From British Colonialism to the Settler Colonial Apartheid State"*¹².

"As a European (Jewish) settler colonial movement, Zionism, founded on racism and racialization, aimed at establishing a new Jewish enclave separate and independent from the indigenous Palestinians. This separateness

made it resemble apartheid South Africa, yet the historical specificity of Palestine, where the Zionist settlers did not just alienate, exclude and when needed, use and exploit the Palestinians, but also expelled the indigenous Palestinians and claim Palestine as a ‘pure’ Jewish state”¹³.

“The current genocide in Gaza is not the result of the October 7 2023 act of resistance by Hamas. Ridding Palestine of its indigenous Palestinians has been the state’s design since its very establishment”¹⁴.

Professor Abdo is one of 650 Canadian academics who signed their names on a document to oppose Canadian institutions adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism¹⁵. According to B’nai Brith Canada, she made remarks during an online event for students at risk, where she stated, *“Money works—I wish we had money. We could have donated a lot of money and buildings. Israeli... you know, you have tons of buildings, everywhere, actually named after donors. That is not a strategy that Palestinians can do. They are not there, in that world. So they can continue to be victims of that”¹⁶*. These comments were made in reference to “Israeli influence” at her university. When questioned on what that meant, she said, *“about the money term... it is often used as a stereotype of the Jewish People”¹⁷*.

Najat El-Khairiy (artist) has posted the following publicly on her Facebook page, which links to her Twitter:

“Our hearts & minds are with the people of Gaza ! The Apartheid state is becoming more & more fascist by the day. May we all remain steadfast in our efforts to boycott the zionist state whilst continuously reinforcing the resilient Palestinian identity”^{18 19}.

“Israel Guilty of Ethnic Cleansing and Apartheid, Says UN Rapporteur”²⁰.

Ramsey Zeid²¹ (Winnipeg, Manitoba; CPAM president) stated on his public Facebook page that, *“Millions of people around the world*

*are starting to see Zionism for what it really is, a disease that must be destroyed*²². Mr. Zeid has also posted publicly on his Instagram account (@ramseyzeid) a poster featuring Yahya Sinwar on the cover of Time Magazine. It had the caption: *“The hero of the century”, “compelling image, a story of a modern day hero of his people”*. Yahya Sinwar was the leader of Hamas in Gaza and the architect of the October 7th Massacre of Israelis by Hamas²³.

Rana Abdulla (Winnipeg, Manitoba; activist) said the following during an interview on February 6th, 2026²⁴:

“Ontario Museum removing the word Palestine from specific artifacts because the uh Zionist groups in Canada have been pressuring them to do so”.

“Um the museum already has a permanent holocaust gallery, an entire floor at at the museum. No one demanded that the Nazis should be consulted uh to ensure balance in telling that story”.

Ms. Abdulla is on record from November 3, 2022, while live-streaming from the Socialist Action Canada YouTube page²⁵:

“how are Palestines responding to this Israeli aggression? Palestinians are united everywhere and now in recent day from Janine to Gaza Israel is trying to break the connection, when when a leader was arrested in Jenin’s refugee camp that triggered the assault on Gaza, this August they launched unannounced an attack on Gaza and after the Gaza ceasefire took place this summer Palestinians got news that Israeli forces killed resistance fighter Ibrahim al-Nabulsi who was 18 by the Army. And this became the symbol of a Young Generation growing up without prospects and who have taken up another armed struggle and Jenin became the symbol of resistance for Palestinians, we have not seen this kind of anger and shock since the second intifada in the early 2000s”.

It is important to note that Ibrahim al-Nabulsi (whom Ms. Abdulla refers to as an 18-year-old resistance fighter who is now the symbol of a generation) was, in reality, the local head of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade²⁶. That is a terrorist organisation that functions alongside Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Yara El-Ghadban (Ottawa, Ontario; anthropologist) discusses her discovery of her great uncle and his friends being members of the Izz Ad-din Al-Qassam Brigades,

"the history book mentioned the revolutionaries um against the British colonials, you know, under against British colonialism and they cited three figures who were uh quite consequential um in the fight uh against the British. And I was reading it with my mom and my mom just she she's like, "But that's my uncle." Yeah. So he said I said, "What?" She said, "Yeah, that's that's that's your great uncle." And then she told me the story uh about Safuria being uh really the center for resistance against the British and the role that my uncle played in it with the other members of the uh of the of the brigades, you know, Izz Ad-din Al-Qassam Brigades. Um and so

*I thought it was important because people don't know the history. People have no idea that Palestinians have been fighting for their freedom for now almost 100 years and that uh this not only precedes the 7th of October, it precedes 1967, it precedes 1948. We've always been fighting and against all these powers"*²⁷.

In response to Israel's 2021 ceasefire with Gaza being declared, she posted on her public YouTube channel. The original was in French; translation is also included below²⁸.

"mais en fait je suis soulagé comme tout le monde mais malheureusement les raisons à la base de ce qui est arrivé elles sont toujours là la colonisation l'occupation la violation des lois internationales donc"

“But actually, I’m relieved like everyone else, but unfortunately the underlying reasons for what happened are still there: colonization, occupation, violation of international law”.

Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Abigail Bakan both support BDS because it is *“aimed at challenging the Israeli state’s illegal military occupation”* and because it is a *“challenge to the hegemonic place of Zionism”*²⁹.

In another joint article, they wrote,

*“The state of Israel, a settler colonial and occupying power over Palestinians, is simultaneously presented as a safe haven for Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust, and Jews internationally.”, “Progressive Jews in the diaspora might feel overwhelmed by their opposition to Netanyahu’s genocidal state as well as by the intensified efforts of mainstream Zionist organizations to seize ownership of the definition of antisemitism and to claim that they speak for the entirety of the Jewish community”*³⁰.

Is there a single “Advisory Committee” member who affirms the indigeneity of the Jewish people to Israel and supports the right of Israel to exist as the Jewish homeland?

APPENDIX C

Observations by Adam Louis- Klein on the New Antisemitism

Adam Louis-Klein (anthropologist, PhD candidate at McGill University, founder of the Movement Against Antizionism) has argued that modern antisemitism has largely shifted its primary vehicle in the West to be anti-Zionism. This form denies Jews sovereignty and peoplehood on their own land while portraying Zionism (and by extension Jewish self-determination) as inherently evil or oppressive. Below are 20 key themes synthesised from Louis-Klein’s body of published work (2024–2026), including talks, interviews, articles, and podcasts. Sources for this section include: ^{1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10}

1. Anti-Zionism is not merely a criticism of Israeli policy but a distinct ideological chapter in the history of antisemitism, replacing older forms while preserving core anti-Jewish tropes.
2. Anti-Zionism constructs a pseudo-consensus through repetition, turning rumour and distortion into accepted “truth” within closed belief systems (e.g., academia and activist circles). Louis-Klein describes this as a “libel cycle” in which false accusations are repeated obsessively until they are taken as fact.
3. Jewish objections to anti-Zionism are pre-emptively dismissed as bad faith, coded as right-wing or illegitimate, excluding them from rational discourse. As Louis-Klein describes it, raising the

issue of anti-Zionism “fuels anti-Zionists, because they can tell the Jewish community is not clear and is not setting a clear boundary”.

4. Anti-Zionism portrays the “Zionist” as a categorically illegitimate actor—presumed oppressive, non-credible, and beyond reason, mirroring historical delegitimation of Jews. As Louis-Klein puts it: *“When someone’s marked as a Zionist, anti-Zionists treat those Zionists differently. They treat them in unequal ways. They advocate for violence, or they advocate for discriminating or boycotting them, or excluding them or purging them”*.
5. Anti-Zionism applies classic antisemitic tropes (e.g., global control, inherent violence, moral inferiority) to Israel, treating the Jewish state as a unique embodiment of evil among nations—a concept that broader new-antisemitism scholars such as Irwin Cotler and Natan Sharansky have described as treating Israel as the “collective Jew”.
6. Terms like “settler-colonialism,” “apartheid,” and “genocide” are weaponised selectively against Israel. They are not used as neutral descriptors but as moral absolutes that equate Zionism with ultimate evil. Louis-Klein calls these “the three core libels” of the anti-Zionist movement.
7. Anti-Zionism denies Jewish indigeneity and peoplehood, framing Jewish sovereignty as an anomaly or crime rather than a legitimate response to historical persecution.
8. Anti-Zionist ideals create a binary where Jews must renounce Zionism (i.e., collective self-determination) or be rejected from academia, echoing historical demands for Jewish assimilation or conversion. Louis-Klein was purged from academic circles after

posting “*Am Yisrael Chai*” on October 9, 2023. (Am Yisrael Chai is a Hebrew Phrase that translates to “The Nation of Israel Lives”).

9. The ideology of anti-Zionism flips victim-perpetrator roles, accusing Jews/Israel of the very oppressive acts that were historically inflicted on them (e.g., colonialism, genocide). As Louis-Klein has written: “*Israelis were cast as the new Nazis; Palestinians, the new Jews. The language of genocide was appropriated and turned against its original referent*”.
10. Anti-Zionism normalises hatred by presenting itself as a progressive political practice that allows antisemitism to spread under the guise of anti-racism or human rights advocacy. As Louis Klein wrote in The Free Press: “*What makes anti-Zionism so seductive in academia is the way it cloaks itself in the moral language of human rights*”.
11. Anti-Zionism erodes critical reason by constructing closed ideological loops where dissent is pathologised as Zionist apologeticism or complicity in oppression. Louis-Klein argues that “*antizionists aren’t interested in debate. What anti-Zionists are interested in is creating a scene of accusation—a kind of show trial*”.
12. Academic and institutional authority is leveraged to legitimise anti-Zionist claims, marginalising balanced or pro-Zionist scholarship as biased or illegitimate. Louis-Klein has been denied the ability to host a single academic talk at McGill on the antisemitic genealogies of anti- Zionism. During such time, at least ten events on the so-called “Gaza genocide” were permitted in his department.
13. Anti-Zionism draws from multiple historical sources: Nazi propaganda, Soviet anti-Zionism, Islamist rejectionism, and

postcolonial theory—blending them into a modern synthesis. In reference to the origin of anti-Zionism, Louis-Klein states: “*It is one hundred percent derived from Soviet propaganda, which went into full operation after 1967*”. He also traced how Nazi ideology fused with the Muslim Brotherhood and how Patrick Wolfe’s settler colonial theory provided the academic scaffolding to hold such ideas together.

14. Anti-Zionism targets Jewish safety and belonging by portraying Zionism as the root cause of global violence. It makes Jews feel unsafe expressing mainstream Jewish identity. Louis-Klein wrote that he lost “*virtually all of my social and professional contacts in academia*” after expressing solidarity with Israel.
15. The anti-Zionist movement excludes nuance. Any defence of Israel or Zionism is conflated with extremism. In contrast, anti-Zionist extremism is excused as “resistance”. Louis-Klein argues that anti-Zionists’ libels are “not offered in good faith” and that there is no productive debate to be had with them because “*they’re not interested in truth, nuance, or complexity*”.
16. Anti-Zionism promotes a form of “new antisemitism” where hatred is launched through political ideology, evading traditional accusations of bigotry. As Louis-Klein says: “*It’s its own way of discriminating, and it’s hiding in plain sight*”.
17. Anti-Zionism seeks to delegitimise the Jewish state as inherently racist or supremacist; it denies Jews the right to self-determination granted to other peoples. Louis-Klein describes this as “*a focused and intense campaign to paint Zionism as a supremacist, racist, and inherently violent movement that has no place in academia, popular culture, or public life in the West*”.

18. Anti-Zionism fosters environments (e.g., campuses, cultural institutions) where Jewish students and faculty face hostility for perceived Zionist ties, creating a poisoned atmosphere. Louis-Klein’s own experience at McGill—and his broader documentation of campus purges exemplify this pattern.
19. The ideology of anti-Zionism relies on moral inversion. It portrays Israel and Jews as uniquely powerful oppressors while downplaying threats from actual authoritarian regimes and terror groups. Louis-Klein traces this specifically to Patrick Wolfe’s settler-colonial theory, which holds that states marked as “settler-colonial” are inherently genocidal. This framework has been adopted by anti-Zionists wholeheartedly against Israel.
20. Confronting anti-Zionism requires treating it as a hate movement rather than a legitimate political movement. It necessitates pushing back against it through education, exposing distortions, and refusing to cede the terms of discourse. This is the core mission of Louis-Klein’s Movement Against AntiZionism (MAAZ): *“We demonstrate how the discrimination, harassment, and purging that Jewish people are experiencing are largely the result of anti-Zionism rather than traditional antisemitism”*.

These observations by Louis-Klein emphasise that anti-Zionism is a sophisticated, adaptive form of Jew-hatred that must be challenged directly to protect Jewish peoplehood and sovereignty. To fight this new form of Jew-hatred, one must be able to recognise its implementation.

British sociologist David Hirsh (Goldsmiths, University of London) created a related concept known as The Livingstone Formulation. In his book *Contemporary Left Antisemitism*¹¹, along with earlier academic papers, he identified and named this rhetorical device now standard in anti-Zionist discourse. Named after former London Mayor Ken Livingstone, the Livingstone Formulation describes the response to an

accusation of antisemitism with a bad-faith counter-accusation of antisemitism. Hirsh presented four key elements to identify the Livingstone Formulation in action¹².

1. “To refuse to discuss the *content* of the accusation by shifting focus instead onto the hidden *motive* for the allegation”.
2. “To make a counter-accusation that the accuser is not mistaken, has not made an error of judgment, but is getting it wrong on purpose”.
3. “To collapse everything—some of which may be demonization of Israel, support for boycott or antisemitism—into a legitimate category like ‘criticism’”.
4. “To allege that those who raise the issue of antisemitism are doing so as a part of a common plan to silence such ‘criticism’”.

The UK Equality and Human Rights Commission effectively endorsed this analysis in 2020. It found that the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn had committed unlawful harassment of Jews, in part by characterising complaints of antisemitism as fabricated smears. The Livingstone Formulation is directly applicable to the CMHR controversy: critics who raise concerns about antisemitic bias in the exhibit process can expect to be accused of trying to “silence Palestinian voices”. That is precisely the deflection Hirsh’s concept predicts, and it is one that we expect to hear¹³.

Zionism is the belief that the Jewish people have a right to self-determination in the form of their state in Israel. As the IHRA definition suggests, anti-Zionism is a form of antisemitism. However, even if it were not, hatred against the right of a nation-state to exist is a hate movement.

Beyond disturbing is the normalisation of the belief that merely wanting to destroy Israel is within the range of reasonable political

opinions. It is acceptable to criticise Israel in the same way as any other state. Anyone who has travelled to Israel will hear plenty of criticism from citizens of all faiths about various policies and leaders. There is an academic industry of inventing and misapplying pseudo-intellectual slurs against Israel, like "ethnostate". Are the Israel haters against a state for the Palestinian people? If we look at state creation in the modern era, we find examples arising from partitions in Yugoslavia, the USSR, and African countries; they are almost all homelands for particular peoples. Israel, from the outset, in its Declaration of Independence and modern constitutionalism, has recognised the individual civil rights of all of its citizens, including the rights of Arabs as its prominent national minority. It has no mandate that anyone believes or practices any religion, and national minorities have grown and developed there. Whereas Jews in the surrounding Arab world have been almost entirely removed, and Jews in Europe and North America are finding themselves increasingly threatened and unwelcome.

APPENDIX D

The CMHR Should Not Adopt the Term Nakba

“Nakba” refers to the emergence of the Palestinian refugees in the context of the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. “Nakba” originally meant and referred to the “catastrophe” that the Arabs did not prevent Israel from becoming a state and failed to destroy it in 1948. Today, the term “Nakba” is still used in a manner that blames and delegitimises Israel. The CMHR is presenting the “Nakba” in its exhibit “Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present” in a form that implies that the entirety of the territory the United Nations proposed to partition for two states in 1947 belonged to Arabs. It ignores that there was a Jewish community that had its own right of self-determination in the land. It also neglects to mention that Israel accepted the two-state solution, and many Arabs and Jews remained in Israel as full citizens. In contrast, many Jews were brutally expelled from the Arab side of the partition when the Arab States invaded in 1948. Here, we have collated relevant statements by respected historians, first-hand testimonies, and other important sources on the history of the “Nakba,” its framing, and its portrayal in literature and associated media.

Efraim Karsh, in 2019, explained that the term “Nakba” was originally coined to describe the magnitude of the Arab defeat in the 1948 war. That war was to be a war of destruction against Israel. In recent decades, the term “Nakba” has morphed into a synonym for Palestinian victimhood¹.

Constantine Zurayk, who coined the term "Nakba" in his 1948 book *The Meaning of the Disaster*, described it as the defeat of the Arabs in Palestine due to their own failures, not external conquest alone², taken from the first English translation, 1956, by R. Bayly Winder.

Arab leaders encouraged the Arabs of Mandatory Palestine to leave their homes temporarily in order to be out of the way of the Arab invasion armies³.

Arab armies entered Palestine to protect Palestinians but abandoned them, forcing emigration and contributing to the catastrophe, *Mahmoud Abbas in a 1976 statement in Falastin el Thawra, an official PLO journal*⁴.

Khaled al-Azm, the Prime Minister of Syria between 1948 and 1949, wrote in his memoirs, "*Since 1948 it is we who demanded the return of the refugees, while it is we who made them leave... We brought disaster upon... Arab refugees by inviting them and bringing pressure to bear upon them to leave*"⁵.

Commander of the Arab Legion John Bagot Glubb said in the London Daily Mail, August 12, 1948, "*villages were frequently abandoned even before they were threatened by the progress of war*"⁶.

"*This wholesale exodus was due partly to the belief of the Arabs, encouraged by the boasting of an unrealistic Arab press and the irresponsible utterances of some of the Arab leaders that it could be only a matter of some weeks before the Jews were defeated by the armies of the Arab States and the Palestinian Arabs enabled to re-enter and retake possession of their country*". Edward Atiyah (then Secretary of the Arab League Office in London) in *The Arabs* (London, 1955), p. 183, as quoted by Bard⁷.

“The Arabs did not want to submit to a truce which would have brought shame upon them, as they rather preferred to abandon their homes, their belongings and everything they possessed in the world and leave the town. This is in fact what they did”. Jamal Bey Husseini, Acting Chairman of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, told the United Nations Security Council, quoted in the UNSC Official Records (N. 62), April 23, 1948⁸.

On 15 September 1948, Mr. Emile Ghoury, who had been the Secretary of the Arab Higher Committee at the time of the Arab invasion of Israel, declared: *“I do not want to impugn anyone but only to help the refugees. The fact that there are these refugees is the direct consequence of the action of the Arab States in opposing partition and the Jewish State. The Arab States agreed upon this policy unanimously and they must share in the solution of the problem”*⁹.

Historian Raphael Israeli had the following to say about the flight of Palestinians occurring at the same time as the flight of the Jewish people from their host nations, *“While the Palestinians were leaving their country, under expulsion, flight, voluntary exile or otherwise, the same number of Jews were fleeing from Arab countries and found refuge in Israel, where they were absorbed into the system. Their flight did not take place during conditions of war but simply derived from their oppressive dhimmi status that they could no longer bear. Therefore, this unplanned exchange of populations, which resolved one problem though it did nothing to settle the other, remains a living reminder that population transfers, though they may be painful and inhuman at the time, may also bring a problem to an end after a few generations, as was the case with the Jewish immigrants to Israel, something which the Arabs bluntly refuse to accept as a solution for the Palestinians”*¹⁰.

On the reputation of Ilan Pappé and the idea that the expulsion of the Palestinians was policy, historian Mordechai Bar-On said, *“Pappé has*

indeed been unable to bring any documentary proof for his assumption that Plan D was a master plan for the cleansing of Palestine, explaining this deficiency by the total secrecy that covered it. As usual he misinterprets what he found in Ben-Gurion's diaries"¹¹.

Pappe has been accused of "fabrications" by Benny Morris, and Pappe himself has stated that he is more interested in "*ideology*" than "*facts*"—"who knows what facts are", he asks. "*We try to convince as many people as we can that our interpretation of the facts is the correct one, and we do it because of ideological reasons, not because we are truthseekers*"¹². Pappe's approach makes him a partisan activist rather than a credible historian—an approach the CMHR might wish to avoid rather than embody. Historian Mordechai Bar-On maintains there was no master plan on the part of Zionist leadership to ethnically cleanse Palestinians in 1948. "*Pappé does not look for the truth, as a historian should at least attempt to do, but, rather, volunteers his pen to the propaganda efforts of the more extreme Palestinian elements in an attempt to delegitimize Israel and Zionism*". Bar-On contends Pappe ignores the context of the 1948 war (such as Arab aggression and the threats of annihilation against the Jewish Yishuv) to focus exclusively on Israeli actions.¹³

As early as the first months of 1948, the Arab League issued orders encouraging local Arabs to seek a temporary refuge in neighbouring countries, later to return to their abodes in the wake of the victorious Arab armies, at which time they could obtain their share of abandoned Jewish property¹⁴. Contemporary statements by Arab leaders fully confirm this version. On 16 August 1948, George Hakini, the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Galilee, recalled: "*The refugees had been confident that their absence from Palestine would not last long; that they would return within a few days within a week or two; their leaders had promised them that the Arab armies would crush the 'Zionist gangs' very quickly and that there would be no need for panic or fear of a long exile*"¹⁵.

According to Shmuel Katz's *Battleground: Fact and Fantasy in Palestine* (2002), on January 30, 1948, the Jaffa newspaper, *Ash Sha'ab*, wrote, "*The first of our fifth column consists of those who abandon their houses and businesses and go to live elsewhere... At the first sign of trouble they take to their heels to escape sharing the burden of struggle*"¹⁶. Mr. Katz also recorded another Jaffa paper called *As Sarih*. In the March 30, 1948, issue the newspaper accused Arab villagers near Tel- Aviv of "*bringing down disgrace on us all by 'abandoning the villages'*", which would place the abandonment of these villages over two weeks prior to the start of the 1948 war¹⁷. Hajj Nimer el-Khatib was the leader of the Arab National Committee in Haifa. He described the actions of Arab soldiers sent to help the city of Jaffa under the leadership of Michel Issa of the Arab Liberation Army. Aryeh Avneri quotes him as saying, "*The situation in Jaffa worsened. The soldiers of Rais Mishel el-issa behaved as if they owned the city. They robbed individuals and homes. Life was of little value, and the honor of women was defiled. This state of affairs led many residents to leave the city under the protection of British tanks*"¹⁸. This shows that the Arabs of Jaffa felt safer to flee the city with the British at the end of the mandate than to stay under the "protection" of the Arab Liberation Army.

Mahmoud Abbas, the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, stated on Jan 1, 2013, "*The [Arab] Salvation Army withdrew from the city [Safed in 1948], causing the [Arab] people to begin emigrating. In Safed, just like Hebron, the people were afraid that the Jews would take revenge for the [Arab] massacre [of 83 Jews] in 1929*".¹⁹

Ahmad from Manshiya, who today is an Israeli citizen, is quoted on July 24, 2023, as referring to an Israeli officer named Monjo. "*He was from Kibbutz Ein HaMifratz. He was in contact with the village chief. He [the Israeli] told the chief; 'Tell them that no one has to leave the place.'*" *But what did the [Arabs] start to say? The chief is a traitor. And people began to flee*"²⁰.

“The truth is that Jews brought a mediator to us, a person we knew and who knew us. They gave us choices. The first choice was that you hand over your weapons and stay on your land and live [peacefully in Israel] the way you live. The second choice was that you leave if you don’t want to hand over [your weapons] If you don’t want to leave and go away, prepare yourselves for battle. All three were hard...For me, handing over my rifle at the time was just like handing over my wife, [so we left]”. Statement by Abu Muhammad ‘Amara on official Palestinian Authority Television, May 15, 2013²¹.

“We left, I mean, the one who made us leave was the Jordanian army, because there were going to be battles and we would be under their feet. They told us: ‘Leave. In 2 hours we will liberate it and then you’ll return.’ We left only with our clothes...” Statement by Fuad Khadir, refugee from Bir Ma’in on official Palestinian Authority Television, May 15, 2013²².

“The radio stations of the Arab regimes kept repeating to us: ‘Get away from the frontline. It’s a matter of ten days, or almost two weeks, and we’ll bring you back to Ein Karem [in Jerusalem]...” Statement by a refugee from Ein Karem, West Jerusalem. Unidentified on official Palestinian Authority Television, July 7, 2009²³.

“The most dangerous thing for us was the [Arab] media...They heard that in a certain town. the Jews did this and that. They killed and slaughtered. Of course, the newspapers lied, and the radio also lied. In other words, they deceived the people”. Statement by refugee from Zakariya, Muhammad Khana, on official Palestinian Authority Television, May 14, 2022²⁴.

Hajj Amin al-Husseini wrote in March of 1948 (weeks before the war began) on behalf of the Arab High Committee, *“The AHC knows that a large number of Palestinians are leaving the country for*

*the neighbouring 'sister' countries... because of the situation... The AHC regards this as flight from the field of honour and sacrifice and sees it as damaging to the name of the holy war movement and damages the good name of the Palestinians in the Arab states and weakens the aid of the Arab peoples for the Palestinian cause, and leaves harmful traces in the economy and commerce of Palestine in general*²⁵. This acknowledges the mass Arab flight from Mandatory Palestine prior to the war of 1948.

In many localities, Arab leaders and local commanders advised or ordered the evacuation of women, children, and civilians from active combat zones, contributing to Palestinian flight²⁶.

Arab countries prepared for war to prevent partition, with Azzam Pasha warning of a “*war of extermination*” against the Jewish state²⁷.

The Arab world rejected the UN Partition Plan and escalated into war with the entry of neighbouring Arab armies to destroy the nascent Jewish state²⁸.

The failed Arab attempt to destroy the State of Israel at birth, and the attendant flight of some 600,000 Palestinian Arabs, has come to be known as the “Nakba”²⁹.

Arab leaders' calls for evacuation turned the self-inflicted defeat into the “Nakba,” as Arabs expected to return after the annihilation of the Jews³⁰.

In dozens of localities, Arab leaders advised or ordered the evacuation of women and children or whole communities to facilitate the fight against the Jewish state³¹.

The Nakba was a self-inflicted disaster emanating from the Arab world's failure to confront Zionism and its choice to wage war. Taken from Constantine Zurayk's later reflections³².

The primary cause of displacement was the war launched by the Arab rejection of partition and invasion, not premeditated expulsion. *Efraim Karsh, Palestine Betrayed*³³.

Rejection of partition and intent to eliminate the Jewish state led to the catastrophe that the Arabs themselves named. *Efraim Karsh, "1948, Israel, and the Palestinians—The True Story"*³⁴.

Arab historiographies acknowledge their own failures in the war that led to the Nakba. *Avraham Sela Arab Historiography of the 1948 war: The quest for legitimacy*³⁵.

The term Nakba originally reflected Arab defeat due to poor preparation and rejectionism, not just victimhood. *Constantine K. Zurayk's The Meaning of the Disaster (1948)*, first English printing 1956³⁶.

Aryeh Avneri's publication in 1984 addressed the claim that Jews evicted Palestinians prior to the founding of the State of Israel and found it lacking. He also established that the majority of Palestinians who left after the war did so "on their own volition". "This study sheds new light on the historic background of the contemporary Palestinian problem. Avneri traces the spread of Jewish settlements over the seventy-year period before the establishment of the State of Israel, in order to see how it affected the existing Arab community's economy and social and cultural institutions. He maintains that there is no historical evidence for the eviction of the Palestinians from Israel prior to the founding of the state. Most of those who left afterwards did so on their own volition"³⁷.

The CMHR has chosen to adopt the use of "Nakba" to refer to malign conduct by Israel that resulted in the displacement of Palestinian Arabs. In doing so, the CMHR is also seeking to compare the Palestinian refugee crisis to the Holocaust. The plight of many Palestinians then

and now is real, but the blame must first and foremost be placed on the shoulders of the ongoing Arab rejection of the rights of Jews to live in Israel as a people in their homeland. At no time did the State of Israel have an agenda of extermination of Palestinians; that is why hundreds of thousands of Arab Palestinians remained, and why there are now several million Arab full-fledged citizens of Israel, who constitute almost 20% of its population.

APPENDIX E

Notable Violent Attacks, Pogroms, Terrorist Campaigns,
Rocket Attacks, and the October 7 Assault by Arab/
Palestinian Groups Against Jews/ Israelis in Israel
(Pre-1948 to Present)

This appendix documents recurring anti-Jewish violence from Ottoman pogroms, British Mandate pogroms, organised post-1948 terrorism, Fedayeen terrorist attacks, Intifada terrorist attacks, rocket barrages from Gaza, and the October 7, 2023, massacres led by Hamas.

The Jewish people have a right to self-determination and to self-defence, no less than any other people. The IHRA definition of anti-semitism is clear on this. However, the CMHR's "Nakba" exhibit acknowledges neither.

The Nakba exhibit will speak of Jewish militias and the Israeli military's use of force. It will omit the Arab States' rejection of negotiation and of partition from Israel, Britain, and the United Nations. There will be mention of Jewish violence, but not the lethal attacks on Jews from local Arab militants and armies in the centuries leading up to 1948, and decades since.

The following sources will illustrate a historical pattern of targeting Jewish and Israeli civilians. Arab leaders often incited these attacks and were typically tied to the rejection of Jewish self-determination.

PRE-1948 PERIOD (OTTOMAN AND BRITISH MANDATE PALESTINE)

1834: Safed and Hebron Pogroms occurred, in which armed Arab/Bedouin mobs attacked Jewish communities. During the revolt, synagogues were looted and burned, homes were destroyed, and women were raped. Significant casualties were reported; sources report hundreds were killed and injured.¹

1838: Safed Pogrom: an Arab mob attacked the Jewish community. They destroyed property, looted the city for three days and killed and injured many. In addition, the mob kidnapped the head rabbi of the community and held him hostage with a ransom amount of \$665,000 CAD in today's dollars².

1920: Nebi Musa Riots (Jerusalem): Over Passover, as Arab pilgrims came to Jerusalem, Musa al-Husayni (the mayor of Jerusalem) incited a mob when he told the mob to "*give their blood for Palestine*", to which the mob responded, "*We will drink the blood of the Jews*". The leader of the pilgrimage then yelled, "*Slaughter the Jews*". This incitement led to a four-day pogrom of mutilation, murder and mass rape. During this riot, the Arab police "*refused to intervene*," and many took part in the riot itself^{3 4}.

1921: Jaffa Riots: these were escalated attacks on Jews; this led to lootings and killings across Jaffa and its surrounding areas. 50 Jews killed. Once again, the Arab police refused to intervene⁵.

1929: Hebron and Safed Massacres: These pogroms were widespread. In Hebron: 67 Jews murdered (women/children), raped/mutilated. Safed: 26 Jews killed. Overall, 133 Jews were killed, and 339 were wounded. As quoted by Bensoussan, French senator Justin Godart wrote about the attacks, "*Among those killed, some had their throats slit by the neck or face, while others suffered unimaginable mutilations*". At

the same time, independently of Albert Londres, a journalist wrote in the newspaper *La Juif errant est arrive* (1929), "Around fifty Jewish men and women had taken refuge outside the ghetto, at the Anglo-Palestinian bank. [The Arabs [...]] were quick to sniff them out. It was Saturday 24th at nine o'clock in the morning. [...] But here it is in two words: they cut off hands, they cut off fingers, they held heads over a stove, they enucleated eyes. [...] Men are mutilated. Girls as young as 13, mothers and grandmothers, were jostled in blood and raped in chorus"^{6 7}.

1936-1939: Arab Revolt Attacks: these included ambushes, bombings, and killings during "the Great Arab Revolt". Approximately 500 Jews were killed. Civilian convoys were ambushed, which included elderly people and children; all were massacred. Georges Bensoussan's research on the topic summarises the barbarity "*The barbarity of some of the murders, in which the victims were found with their organs cut out and stuffed into their mouths, their bodies disemboweled and mutilated, their children tortured, as well as the destruction of crops and fruit trees*"⁸.

1938: Tiberias Pogrom: Armed Arab rioters invaded a Jewish neighbourhood in Tiberias, leading to 21 Jews being slaughtered, including 11 children, all of whom were under the age of 13, the youngest were 1 year old. They burned many of their victims alive after stabbing them. The rioters mutilated the bodies of their victims and burned their homes and synagogues⁹.

POST-1948 PERIOD (AFTER ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE)

1950s-1960s: Palestinian Fedayeen Insurgency cross-border raids: These were terrorist attacks that Egyptians, Jordanians, and Syrians sponsored. They were launched from Gaza and the West Bank into Israel. This entry comprises hundreds of attacks, each of which killed dozens of Israelis annually. They typically targeted Israeli civilians and farms¹⁰.

1970: Avivim School Bus Massacre: Terrorists from the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) ambushed a school bus, 12 were killed, including 9 children, and 25 were wounded^{11 12}.

1972: Munich Olympics Massacre: These attacks were conducted by the Black September terrorist organisation (PLO-affiliated). They targeted and killed 11 Israeli athletes who were competing in the Olympics after breaking into the Olympic village and holding the athletes hostage in Munich, Germany¹³.

1974: Ma'alot Massacre: This attack was conducted by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP, which is a PLO faction). They violently seized an elementary school and held it hostage, killing 22 children and 4 adults¹⁴.

1978: Coastal Road Massacre: The PLO hijacked a chartered bus during a work outing for transport workers and their families. The terrorists killed 38 civilians, including 13 children, and left 71 wounded¹⁵.

1987–1993: First Intifada Uprising: This was a violent uprising led by various terrorist factions, including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, DFLP, PLO, and the PFLP. It included attacking Israeli civilians and armed forces alike, employing methods such as stabbings, shootings, throwing Molotov cocktails, and using slings to hurl rocks. Approximately 160 Israelis were killed, including many civilians¹⁶.

2000–2005: The Second Intifada (Al-Aqsa Intifada): This uprising was more militant in its focus. The terrorist factions typically used mortars, suicide bombings, mass stabbings, assassinations, and targeted kidnappings of Israeli civilians. During this time, ~138–146 suicide bombings took place (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades took credit for most), usually targeted at buses/

restaurants/malls. The Second Intifada led to more than 1,000 Israelis being killed (mostly civilians)^{17 18}.

ROCKET ATTACKS FROM GAZA AND THE OCTOBER 7, 2023, ASSAULT

Rocket Attacks from Gaza (2001–Present): Since 2001, more than 20,000 rockets and mortars have been fired from Gaza alone. These attacks targeted Israeli civilian centres and were primarily launched by Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Major waves include 2008–2009 (thousands of rockets and mortars were fired), 2012 (~1,500 rockets and mortars), 2014 (~4,500), and 2021 (~4,300)¹⁹.

October 7, 2023: That morning, Hamas guided terrorists and civilian sympathisers over the border from Gaza into Israel. They had the intent to attack communities (including co-ops and communes), military bases, and a peaceful music festival. Approximately 1,200 Israelis were killed (mostly civilians), thousands were wounded, countless atrocities were committed (including mass murder, sexual assaults, torture), and 251 people were kidnapped and taken as hostages by these terrorists. The hostages were taken deep into Gaza and mostly held underground by a mix of civilians and known terrorist entities, some for upwards of 840 days. Approximately 5,000 rockets were fired initially to cover the incursion. October 7th was the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust^{20 21 22}.

On October 24, 2023, Hamas Leadership made a statement on its intent to repeat the attacks of October 7th, 2023. Here are Ghazi Hamad’s statements as a member of Hamas’s Political Bureau, during an LBC TV interview:

“Israel is a country that has no place on our land [...] because it constitutes a security, military, and political catastrophe to the Arab and Islamic nation and must be finished. [...] We must teach Israel a lesson and we

will do this again and again. The Al-Aqsa Flood [October 7] is just the first time, and there will be a second, a third, a fourth because we have the determination, the resolve, and the capabilities to fight". This was vowed to repeat "time and again until Israel is annihilated"^{23 24}.

APPENDIX F

Violent Attacks by Rejectionist Palestinians Against Palestinians Who Favoured Co-Existence with Israel, and Those Who Were Accused of Collaboration (Late 19th Century to Present)

This appendix documents historical cases where Palestinian rejectionists targeted, assaulted, or killed fellow Palestinians who were perceived to have collaborated with the State of Israel or its inhabitants. Examples of famous rejectionist groups include: various Arab nationalist groups, the Mandate period Arab Higher Committee, PLO factions, Hamas, and other militant groups. These rejectionist groups also targeted Palestinians who were perceived to have done the following: collaboration with Zionists/Israel, selling land to Jews, supporting co-existence, supporting peace negotiations, and supporting two-state solutions. Such violence aimed to enforce rejectionism, deter “treason,” and maintain unified opposition to Jewish/Israeli presence.

This pattern spans two centuries but is most heavily documented from the British Mandate era onward. Cases prior to the establishment of the State of Israel often involved land sales or perceived cooperation with Zionists. Post-1948 cases typically include accusations of collaboration with Israel, support for peace processes (e.g., Oslo), or accusations of being a moderate.

PRE-1948 / MANDATE PERIOD (1920s–1940s)

1920s–1930s: During this time, there were assassinations and threats against Arabs who sold land to Jews during the British Mandate. Palestinian Arab leaders (including the Arab Higher Committee under Hajj Amin al-Husseini) would issue fatwas and threats that labelled land sellers as traitors. Several sellers or agents were murdered or assaulted to deter sales. Multiple cases have been reported where Arab landowners and brokers were killed after selling to Jewish buyers¹. This was also documented in Zionist and British reports about Arab intimidation campaigns².

1936–1939: Arab Revolt: Rejectionist militants killed dozens of Palestinians accused of cooperating with authorities or Jews (including village leaders and informants). It is estimated that over 1,000 Arabs were killed by fellow Arabs (many for alleged collaboration) during the Great Revolt alone, before the creation of the State of Israel³. Many of these murders are attributed to Mohammed Amin al-Husseini (the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and President of the Supreme Muslim Council), either through direction or encouragement⁴.

POST-1948 / PLO ERA (1960s–1990s)

1970s–1980s: PLO/Fatah executed suspected collaborators with Israel. PLO factions killed hundreds of Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel or opposing armed struggle. In Lebanon (pre-1982) and during the First Intifada (1987–1993), “collaborators” (real or suspected moderates) were targeted and often killed. It is estimated that over 1,000 Palestinians were killed by the PLO and other Palestinian militant groups for alleged collaboration between 1987 and 1993 alone⁵.

1990s: Post-Oslo killings of peace supporters and suspected collaborators: After the Oslo Accords (1993), rejectionists (including Hamas and PFLP) assassinated or attacked Palestinians who were supporting peace. There are multiple cases of Fatah/PLO death squads killing suspected informers and Oslo backers⁶.

HAMAS ERA (2000s–PRESENT)

2007–2008: Hamas takeover of Gaza: Israel’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and subsequent transfer of governing authority to Fatah/Palestinian Authority took place in 2007. Fatah/PA is the government that rules the Palestinian areas in the West Bank. Israel’s withdrawal created an opportunity for Hamas to win local elections. After the elections, Hamas orchestrated the killings of Fatah members and known moderates, thus eliminating their opposition. During the 2007 battle for Gaza, Hamas killed dozens of Fatah supporters, and many were executed or thrown from buildings.⁷

2014: Gaza Conflict: Hamas executed at least 23 Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel. These executions were public shootings outside mosques⁸.

2023–2025: Post-October 7th 2023 killings of suspected collaborators and moderates: Since October 7th, 2023, Hamas has executed Palestinians accused of collaboration with Israel. Those killed include people seen as potential peace advocates or critics of Hamas⁹.

It is clear that rejectionist factions have historically used violence to suppress internal moderation and perceived cooperation from within the Palestinian community. Executing those who would work with Israel and Zionists enforces a hardline stance against co-existence and peace processes. Such internal repression has hindered Palestinian political development and the emergence of leadership willing to pursue peaceful co-existence.

APPENDIX G

Refutation of Genocide Allegations Against Israel in Gaza (Post-October 7, 2023)

Hamas is a terrorist organisation that has, as its official goal, the elimination of the State of Israel¹. The October 7 attacks were genocidal. The Israeli military's response was aimed at destroying Hamas as a threat to Israel and freeing the hostages that Hamas had taken. Civilian casualties are inevitable in war, but they are especially hard to avoid when the enemy (Hamas) is operating out of civilian areas (including hospitals and schools), an act that is contrary to the laws of war. Israel nevertheless has taken a variety of measures to mitigate civilian harm when pursuing its legitimate military objectives. These measures include sending electronic messages and calling civilians to inform them when to evacuate, warning them when buildings would be targeted so they could escape, and allowing massive quantities of humanitarian aid to enter the warzone². Conducting war in an urban battlefield is extremely difficult, especially when the enemy violates the laws of war and puts its civilian populace in danger to protect itself. Despite the difficulty of the situation, according to Urban Warfare Analyst John Spencer (Chair of Urban Warfare Studies at the Modern War Institute, West Point), the civilian-to-military casualty ratio due to Israeli military action in Gaza was consistently less than 2:1—a figure he argues is well within the bounds of what international humanitarian law expects and what comparable militaries have done in comparable circumstances, such as the elimination of ISIS from Mosul^{3 4}. On March 25, 2024, he cited a ratio of 1.5:1 civilians to combatants⁵.

Honest Reporting Canada calculates the civilian-to-military casualty ratio to be 1.45:1, a lesser figure than what John Spencer considers acceptable⁶. Colonel Richard Kemp, of the British Armed Forces (retired), has spoken on Israel's attitudes towards civilians in warzones, *"In fact, taken together, the techniques I have described and the IDF's other civilian harm mitigation measures represent by far the largest scale and most sophisticated efforts ever made to avoid civilian casualties in battle"*.

The epitome of "new antisemitism" is the "genocide" allegation. Its goal is the inversion of the victim and perpetrator, with the aim of delegitimising Israel. The motive is to extract guilt from the European and Arab powers who perpetrated the Holocaust with the intention of having people side with the "new victims" of this "new genocide". Together, these ideas form a linkage that if the genocide the Nazis committed was bad, then the genocide the Jews are supposedly committing is just as bad. Therefore, the Jews are just as bad as the Nazis. The problem with this logic is that it falls apart once the allegation that Israel is committing genocide is disproven. There is an important question to ask on this topic: why is there a false claim that Israel is committing genocide? It is because the genocide allegation is particularly potent against the Jewish people, who not 81 years ago had a third of their entire ethnic group murdered in a genocide. It is potent because this "new antisemitism" seeks to claim that the Jewish people never learned their lesson, and as such, Jews are not deserving of the sympathy of the world. Since Israel is not committing genocide, the nature of these allegations is revealed. The claim of genocide is thinly veiled "new antisemitism" that seeks to erode the world's support for Israel by clinging to a monstrous act of the past and claiming that the Jews are the villains now.

JOHN SPENCER: He compares Gaza to other urban wars, and in doing so highlights Israel's unprecedented mitigation of civilian casualties. This is achieved through tactics such as roof-knocking, leaflet-dropping, and proper aid facilitation. John Spencer concludes that Israel has no intent to destroy Palestinians as a group⁷.

JOHN SPENCER: In this article, he warns that mislabelling the war in Gaza as genocide endangers future Western military operations. He states clearly: “*There has been no genocide in Gaza. Israel has not intentionally targeted civilians*”⁸.

MILITARY HISTORIAN PROFESSOR DANNY ORBACH: In July 2025, he published a multi-author report that draws on quantitative data, forensics, and legal analysis. In it, he found that Israel did not systematically target civilians, nor did it implement a starvation policy, and there was no genocidal intent present. In fact, the aid that Israel delivered to Gaza during the war exceeded the aid it delivered pre-war⁹.

UN WATCH: It presented a detailed rebuttal to a UNHRC report by the Pillay Commission that accused Israel of genocide. UN Watch presented a rebuttal that argued that Israel lacked genocidal intent, that there was a misuse of evidence, and that there was a reliance on propaganda in the report¹⁰.

DE GRUYTER BRILL: A 2025 open-source analysis of Israeli air strikes on Gaza shows no pattern consistent with genocide¹¹.

JOHN SPENCER: In 2024, he stated, “*Israel Implemented More Measures to Prevent Civilian Casualties Than Any Other Nation in History*”. This reinforces the point that when Israel’s actions are analysed from a military perspective, it only reinforces that there is no genocidal intent¹².

MARK GOLDFEDER AND EUGENE KONTOROVICH: This is a 2025 critique of Amnesty International’s report against Israel. “*Amnesty’s genocide accusation distorts both the facts and the law for the sake of sensational headlines...No reasonable observer could argue that Israel’s military actions—directed against Hamas, a terrorist organization explicitly dedicated to the Jewish state’s destruction—constitute genocide under this prevailing standard*”¹³.

MATTHEW MILLER, U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN: He repeatedly stated that the U.S.A.’s view of Israel’s actions in this war is that Israel’s actions do not constitute genocide¹⁴.

GERMAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL STATEMENT: In December 2024, Germany explicitly rejected the label of genocide being levied against the war in Gaza. A German Foreign Ministry Spokesman stated, “*the question of genocide presupposes a clear intention to eradicate an ethnic group. I still do not recognize any such clear intention and therefore I cannot share the conclusions of the report*”¹⁵.

JOHN SPENCER FOR THE WASHINGTON FREE BEACON: Here, Mr. Spencer is critical of a U.N. genocide report against Israel because of intentional omissions. On September 17, 2025, he wrote, “*Taken together, these omissions create a distorted picture. By removing Hamas from the battlefield, the commission portrays Israel as waging a one-sided assault on civilians. By ignoring Hamas’s crimes against its own population, it absolves Hamas of responsibility for civilian suffering. By erasing Israel’s humanitarian efforts, it denies evidence that contradicts the accusation of genocidal intent. This is not an investigation. It is narrative construction*”¹⁶.

THE DAVID S. WYMAN INSTITUTE FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES: In this 2026 report, one hundred Holocaust scholars rejected the use of the term genocide in relation to Israel’s war in Gaza¹⁷.

It is legitimate to demand and expect, in any war, that the Laws of War and International Humanitarian Law will be observed. On October 7, Hamas, a terrorist and openly genocidal antisemitic organisation, committed the deadliest attack on Jewish civilians since the Holocaust. For up to 843 days, it kept hostages in tunnels and tortured and sexually assaulted them^{18 19}. Immediately, there were calls for ceasefires, which would have left the hostages in brutal captivity while Hamas remained

an active threat. There was an immediate wave of hate-filled slurs and protests against Israel; among them was the slander of “genocide”. The CMHR, as a national institution of Canada, should remain a bastion of equality. However, the CMHR, as documented earlier, had no problem with allowing an unauthorised “die-in” inside its building but rejected a request by supporters of Israel to counter-demonstrate. With its Nakba exhibition, the CMHR is moving from passive endorsement of Israel hatred to hosting a one-sided, historically distorted exercise that can only contribute to the isolation and fear of the remaining Jewish community in Canada.

APPENDIX H

UJPO, IJV, and Other Organisations Hostile to Israel Which Represent a Tiny Fraction of Jewish Opinion in Canada

UJPO (United Jewish People's Order) has a long and documented history of estrangement from mainstream Canadian Jewish institutions. In 2011, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Canadian Jewish Congress formally severed ties with UJPO's Winchevsky Centre in Toronto after the organisation hosted an event featuring anti-Zionist activist and Auschwitz survivor Hajo Meyer, a member of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network¹. That rupture was not new: during the Cold War, at Samuel Bronfman's urging, the Canadian Jewish Congress had expelled UJPO and other left-leaning Jewish organisations in 1951, while UJPO was one of the largest Jewish fraternal organisations in Canada; this separation lasted over four decades, until 1995².

UJPO Winnipeg's website openly states that its mission includes working "*to support the rights of Palestinians to their rightful land and for Palestinians and Israelis to live in peace, prosperity, and equality*"³. The organisation's website also documents its members' participation in Free Palestine rallies, runs for Palestine, and protests outside pro-Israel events at Winnipeg synagogues⁴. Harold Shuster, who represented Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) at the November 2 panel, is also identified on the IJV website as a member of IJV's BDS Committee, underscoring the close organisational overlap between UJPO, IJV, and the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement in Winnipeg⁵.

THE EKOS SURVEY AND WHAT CANADIAN JEWS ACTUALLY THINK

IJV and UJPO jointly commissioned EKOS surveys of Canadian Jewish opinion, which they have promoted as evidence that Canadian Jews are not uniformly supportive of Israel. However, these claims have been sharply disputed, including by the very researcher whose data they cite. A more rigorous 2024 survey of 588 Canadian Jews conducted by the polling firm Leger, and sponsored by the New Israel Fund of Canada, JSpaceCanada, Canadian Friends of Peace Now and led by University of Toronto sociologist Robert Brym—found that 84% of Canadian Jews say they are “very” or “somewhat” emotionally attached to Israel, and that 94% support the existence of Israel as a Jewish state⁶. Half of the respondents favoured a two-state solution, while only 8% supported a single bi-national state⁷.

As reported by the Canadian Jewish News in December 2025, Brym himself was very upset that anti-Israel activists had been “*deliberately weaponizing his findings and creating misleading impressions to bolster their campaigns*”—a criticism he directed specifically at IJV’s use of the data at Senate committee hearings on antisemitism⁸.

BREAK WITH MAINSTREAM JEWISH ORGANISATIONS

The exhibit titled “*Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present*” was formally announced by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) in November 2025 and scheduled to open in June 2026. The announcement triggered immediate opposition from mainstream Jewish organisations, which objected to the lack of consultation⁹.

The Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada announced it was withdrawing from its partnership with the CMHR—including from a planned January 27 Holocaust Remembrance Day program—and would not plan any further exhibitions in partnership with the museum. Executive director Belle Jarniewski stated that “*the decision was based on the CMHR’s lack of consultation with the organized Jewish community*” and that the Centre was “*tremendously concerned that the planned exhibit will lack balanced scholarly research and will ignore key issues of the*

historical and current geopolitical reality that is Israel”^{10 11 12}.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) also publicly challenged the CMHR, with CIJA Vice President Gustavo Zentner stating that “*our community has not been consulted*” and warning that the exhibit, as framed, would “deliver an incomplete and unbalanced narrative, one that omits Jewish refugee” experiences from 1948¹³.

The Abraham Global Peace Initiative (AGPI) sent a detailed letter to the CMHR’s chief executive, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, and the Prime Minister, requesting that the exhibit be suspended while a thorough review is carried out. AGPI expressed concern about the museum’s use of the term “Nakba,” calling it “*a politicized and pejorative term whose implicit meaning is the delegitimization of Israel*”^{14 15}.

Notably, the organisations that publicly supported the exhibit were the same organisations that participated in the November 2nd panel: Independent Jewish Voices Canada, the United Jewish People’s Order of Canada, and the Jewish Faculty Network. As CBC News reported, these three groups issued a joint statement commending the museum for presenting what they called the first large-scale exhibit in Canada on the Nakba¹⁶.

The current Director of Research and Exhibition Development for the CMHR spoke from the audience at a UJPO event in November 2025 and mentioned her involvement in the Nakba exhibit. The same official is on record at a 2017 event sponsored by IJV as proposing that “*Ashkenazi Jews in Canada and the U.S. are in a greater position of safety than we have ever seen*”, and that Ashkenazi Jews in North America can “*pass for white*” and should “*share their privilege*”¹⁷. Here and now in Canada, where the overwhelming majority of Canadian Jewish students report having at times hidden their identity, it might be reasonable to question what “*passing for white*” and “*privilege*” mean.

The CEO of the CMHR says the museum has received emails of support from members of the Jewish community across Canada, “*who believe that Palestinian experiences should be shared*”¹⁸.

We believe that there are very few who would dispute that “*Palestinian*

experiences should be shared’, but it is a different proposition altogether to find those who would agree that a national institution should provide a platform for an exhibit that is biased and filled with animus against the Jewish state. The museum’s proposed historical narrative is a potted history of the conflict. It actively excludes the voices of other peoples and reputable experts on the subject. The fact that fringe organisations identifying as Jewish are included over the mainstream community, and that emails have been received from people who identify as Jews, does not obviate the lack of consultation with organisations that represent the vast majority of the Jewish population and Jewish opinions. The CMHR is ignoring the lived experiences of the Jewish people today, in favour of a caricaturized fringe view of Jews that fits within an ahistorical framework.

APPENDIX I

The New Antisemitism and the Imperilled Position of Canadian Jews

This appendix documents the alarming rise of antisemitism in Canada and the increasingly imperilled position of Canadian Jews. The CMHR's Nakba exhibit does not exist in a vacuum. It is being launched into a national environment in which Jews are the most targeted minority group for hate crimes in Canada. Jewish students currently hide their identities on university campuses. Jewish communities spend millions of dollars per year on physical security for synagogues and schools. These problems are leading to significant numbers of Jewish professionals considering or leaving the country. The exhibit is advancing a one-sided narrative that demonises and delegitimises Israel, which is central to the identity of the vast majority of Canadian Jews. Minimising a core portion of the Jewish identity and stigmatising the Jewish people for their support of the only perpetual place where Jews are safe in the Middle East will inevitably contribute to this crisis.

HATE CRIME STATISTICS: JEWS AS CANADA'S MOST TARGETED GROUP

Statistics Canada data for 2024 reveal that 920 police-reported hate crimes targeted Jewish Canadians¹. That makes Jews the most targeted religious group in the country, accounting for approximately 68 percent of all religiously motivated hate crimes. As CIJA CEO Noah Shack stated, "*a Jewish Canadian was 25 times more likely to experience a hate crime than any other Canadian*"². This figure is staggering, given

that Jews constitute approximately 1 percent of Canada's population. The number of hate crimes against Jews had already surged 82 percent from 2022 to 2023 (from 527 to 959 incidents according to Statistics Canada)³. Although 2024 saw a slight decrease from the 2023 peak, it remained at historically unprecedented levels. In Toronto alone, anti-Jewish hate crimes accounted for 40 percent of all reported hate crime occurrences in 2024⁴.

B'nai Brith Canada's 2024 Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents reported 6,219 antisemitic incidents in Canada—an average of approximately 17 incidents per day, a 7.4 percent increase over 2023, and a 124 percent increase over 2022. These incidents included firebombing synagogues, shootings at Jewish schools, attacks on Jewish-owned businesses, and arrests of suspects on terror-related charges. B'nai Brith's David Matas warned: "*Antisemitism in Canada is becoming normalized*"^{5 6}.

The statistics only tell part of the story. Since October 7, 2023, Canada has witnessed an unprecedented wave of physical attacks on Jewish institutions. Multiple Jewish schools in Montreal have been shot at, including the Bais Chaya Mushka Girls Elementary School in North York, Toronto, which was targeted by gunfire on both May 25, 2024, and October 12, 2024⁷. Synagogues have been firebombed, including Vancouver's Schara Tzedek Synagogue and Montreal's Beth Tikvah Synagogue (December 2024). Over 100 Jewish institutions received mass bomb threats in August 2024⁸. A Jewish father was beaten in front of his children in Montreal; a Jewish woman was stabbed in an Ottawa grocery store^{9 10}. Jewish-owned businesses have been targeted with arson and protests^{11 12 13 14 15}.

THE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF SECURITY

Canadian Jewish communities are now spending millions of dollars on physical security that no community in a free democracy should have to bear. In October 2025, Montreal's Jewish community announced it had raised \$40 million to fund security for synagogues and schools, transforming holiday worship into carefully shielded events with

security guards, cameras, and wristband-controlled entry¹⁶. The federal government has created the Canada Community Security Program (CCSP) with \$65 million in new funding, acknowledging the scale of the threat¹⁷. In the United States, the Jewish Federations of North America reported to Congress that American Jewish communities spend \$765 million annually on security, with 14 percent of a typical Jewish organisation’s budget dedicated to security costs¹⁸. As CIJA’s then-CEO Shimon Koffler Fogel stated: *“This year, parents were scared to send their children to school, congregants were prevented from entering synagogues, and community members were blocked from and terrorized for participating in events”*¹⁹.

JEWISH STUDENTS HIDING THEIR IDENTITY ON CAMPUS

A 2025 Anti-Defamation League (ADL)–World Union of Jewish Students survey of 1,727 students in over 60 countries found that 78 percent of Jewish students conceal their religious identity and 81 percent hide their Zionist identity on campus²⁰. In Canada specifically, Hillel International recorded 2,334 antisemitic incidents during the 2024 school year at North American campuses—the highest ever—with anti-Semitic incidents across nine Ontario campuses increasing elevenfold from the previous year²¹. The Abraham Global Peace Initiative’s 2024 Canadian Universities Antisemitism Report examined 54 universities. It assigned poor or failing grades to 20 of them in the areas of campus atmosphere, Jewish student safety, and EDI policy. Jewish students at McGill, York, Toronto, Concordia, and other Canadian universities have described feeling unsafe, self-censoring in class, and hiding their identities²². A University of Calgary social work student reported that a professor justified October 7 and promoted anti-Zionism in class, characterising it as *“an act of resistance against the white colonizer”*²³. Six prominent Canadian universities face proposed class-action lawsuits alleging antisemitism²⁴.

ANTISEMITISM IN K-12 SCHOOLS

A federally commissioned report by University of Toronto sociologist Robert Brym, published in July 2025 by the Office of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, documented 781 antisemitic incidents reported in Ontario schools between October 7, 2023, and January 2025²⁵. The report found Nazi salutes, Holocaust diminishment, violent antisemitic rhetoric, and teachers promoting slogans such as “*From the River to the Sea*” in class²⁶. In nearly half of all reported cases, schools failed to investigate. In many instances, it was recommended that the Jewish student be removed rather than the perpetrator disciplined²⁷. Many students now hide their Jewish identity out of fear²⁸.

JEWS CONSIDERING LEAVING CANADA

A September 2024 CIJA survey found that 82 percent of Canadian Jews believed Canada had become less safe since October 7, 2023²⁹. A survey by the Jewish Medical Association of Ontario (JMAO) of 1,000 Jewish doctors, medical students, and residents found that 31 percent were strongly considering or considering leaving Canada due to rising antisemitism in hospitals and academia³⁰. JMAO chair Dr. Ayelet Kuper warned that “*this could lead to hundreds of doctors leaving Ontario at a time when our system is crumbling*”³¹. Among Jewish medical students, the proportion reporting antisemitism rose from 27.5 percent before October 7 to 62.7 percent after it³². Over half of survey participants expressed concern that Jewish patients could receive substandard care because of pervasive bias.³³ One-third of Jewish doctors reported considering reducing their teaching responsibilities, and 14 percent had already withdrawn from teaching due to the hostile environment³⁴. Prominent Canadian Jews in other fields have also publicly stated they are considering emigration. A Jewish community leader in Vancouver wrote that “*for my family, the luxury of patience has run out and our confidence in Canada’s political leadership is gone*”³⁵.

SURVEY RESEARCH: CANADIAN JEWS FEEL UNSAFE AND VICTIMISED

A rigorous survey of Canadian Jewish attitudes was conducted by University of Toronto sociologist Robert Brym in February 2024 and published in *Canadian Jewish Studies*. It found that most Canadian Jews feel unsafe and victimised³⁶. They perceive a rise in negative attitudes toward Jews and doubt the situation will improve. The main reason is that extreme anti-Israel statements and actions have proliferated. Because support for the existence of a Jewish state is central to Jewish identity, 94 percent of Canadian Jews support Israel’s existence as a Jewish state, and 84 percent report being emotionally attached to Israel^{37 38}. *“Most Jews regard extreme anti-Israel statements as a direct threat to their existence as Jews”*—Robert Brym³⁹.

THE CMHR’S EXHIBIT IN THIS CONTEXT

It is against this backdrop—a community under siege, its children afraid to go to school, its professionals considering emigration, its institutions fortified like military installations—that the CMHR proposes to open an exhibit that demonises and delegitimises Israel. The exhibit, curated by people who variously call Zionism a “*disease*” and condone violent intifada, will validate and amplify the very narratives that fuel antisemitic hatred. It will tell Jewish Canadians that their national museum, which is funded by their tax dollars, has chosen to platform the delegitimation of the state that 94 percent of them support, and that it was done without any meaningful input from their community. At a time when Jewish Canadians are 25 times more likely than any other Canadians to be targeted by hate crimes, the CMHR risks contributing to the very climate of hostility that its mandate requires it to combat. The Board of Trustees has a legal, ethical, and moral obligation to halt this exhibit and ensure that Canada’s national human rights museum does not become an instrument of persecution for a community it is supposed to protect.

APPENDIX J

The Indigeneity of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel

Professor Haskel Greenfield is an Archaeologist who has studied and travelled the world over. For the past two decades, his focus has been fixed on the ancient Levant and Israel. He is adamant that the history, genetics, and archaeology of the region point to the Jewish people being the last surviving indigenous people of Israel. Below is his most recent article on the subject, published in the Winnipeg Jewish Review¹.

THE NEED TO DIG DOWN UNDER THE CMHR'S NAKBA EXHIBIT

—DR. HASKEL GREENFIELD

The website of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights presents the “Nakba” in a manner that vilifies Israel. It does not acknowledge that Jews are the long-standing indigenous people in the land and that they have a right of self determination. There is no mention that the root cause of Palestinian displacement was the Arab rejection of partition of the original two-state solution and the subsequent military invasion of Israel with the intent of destroying it.

Here I will focus on the issue of indigeneity. I am a professional anthropologist and archaeologist who has conducted research in both Israel and other Near Eastern countries (e.g., Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey) for the last 25 years.

Some 90% of Jews, including myself, can trace their genetic origins back to the southern Levantine region extending in time over

several thousands of years. Some of us have even deeper links to the region as my own Paternal paleo-haplogroup suggests that my roots extend even farther back in antiquity—to forty thousand years ago in this region! Jews are clearly the indigenous peoples of the Land of Israel; we predate the later conquering Arab empires by tens of thousands of years.

The Jewish People are indigenous to their ancestral homeland, the Land of Israel, where there is a genesis of our culture, language and traditions. We have been in the land of Israel since antiquity and have always maintained a presence in our homeland.

Similarly, Hebrew cannot be considered a colonial language as it is a Semitic language from the Levant, not a European language that intrudes into the region. There are language families that have invaded the Near East from afar, such as the Turkic family which comes from Central Asia.

There were earlier inhabitants of the region, even before our ancestors arrived in the Land of Israel. These were the Canaanites. Our Patriarchs and Matriarchs interacted with them, fought with them, and sometimes were joined by them even before we were exiled in Egypt. The Age of Patriarchs is thought to have been sometime between 1750 and 1600 BCE.

While the Bible tells how the Israelites migrated to Egypt because of a drought in Canaan, there is also evidence that some stayed. These eventually join with those who return to Canaan with Joshua around 1200 BCE. There is significant archaeological evidence to show the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites. Destruction levels at several sites correspond to the events described in ancient written texts of the Canaanite-Israelite battles, such as in the book of Joshua or the Books of Judges. At most sites, however there is no evidence of destruction and the Canaanites joined and were absorbed into the ancient Israelite culture and political units. Thus, there was a fusion of the two people over time. Our roots, as a result, go deeper than ever imagined.

Jews are the original inhabitants of the Land of Israel who have

kept continuous physical, religious, cultural and spiritual ties to the land for almost 4000 years. As the earlier inhabitants have disappeared, Jews are the earliest remaining indigenous people and thus the last surviving indigenous inhabitants of the Land of Canaan (known today and through the past 3000 years of history as the Land of Israel). The earliest historical record of Israelites in the Land of Israel comes from independent sources in Egypt. There are monuments from the 19th dynasty at about 1200 BCE that mention Israel as a people. The Pharaoh Merneptah writes about smiting “Israel”. Soon after the Egyptian empire in the Levant collapsed and independent Jewish polities emerge across the region. These culminate in the formation of the United Monarchy of Israel under Kings David and Solomon about 1000 BCE.

There are no earlier examples of other peoples as being indigenous in the region that still exist today with the same culture, the same yearning, speaking the same language, and so on. This is why Jews are the only indigenous peoples of the Land of Israel. Anyone who came more recently are not indigenous. They are by definition, invaders!

In the 12th century BCE, a group of people that we know from Egyptian sources as “Peoples of the Sea” invaded Egypt. They came as invaders from the Aegean region as part of a mass migration. After being thrown out of Egypt, they landed on the southern coast of Israel and captured the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath. We know their name because it was recorded in Egyptian texts as the “Peleset”. These became the “Plishtim” in Hebrew. The root word of “Plishtim” in Hebrew is “Palash”, which means to invade. The modern-day conjugation of the name Palestinian mean invaders in Hebrew. I participated in the excavation of one of the major Philistine cities—ancient Gath of the Philistines and the Hometown of Goliath. The word Palestinian derives from Philistine, as the southern coastal plain of Israel is known as Philistia. This is where the Philistines of ancient times lived. The Philistines of antiquity were destroyed and dispersed as a people or nation by the invading armies of the Assyrians

and Babylonian empires in the 7th and 6th centuries BCE.

They did not survive and had no known modern descendants in the region. While modern Palestinians often claim to be descendants of the Philistines, there is no historical, cultural, genetic, or archaeological link between the two.

The word “Palestine” first appeared historically in the 5th century BCE. Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian, wrote of a “district of Syria, called Palaistinê” between Phoenicia and Egypt in *The Histories*. This is a broader geographic region than biblical Philistia (mentioned above). Includes both the coastal and the inland regions such as the Judean Mountains and the Jordan Rift Valley (Wikipedia). But it was never used by these early writers as a name of a people nor as a replacement for the ancient State of Israel, Judah, or other Jewish political entity.

The name Palestine was given to the southern Levant by the Roman emperor Hadrian after he quelled a Jewish revolt in the area (132-136 CE, Bar Kokhba Revolt) and dispersed much of the population. He renamed the province of Judea and the Land of Israel as the Roman province of Syria-Palaestina to delink any connection to Jews. The Romans tried to wipe away the Jewish connection from the land by deporting vast numbers of Jews. Yet, large numbers of Jews continued to reside across the land.

There was always a Jewish presence in the Land of Israel despite the marauding armies of the various conquerors, whether they be Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks, Persians, and so on throughout Jewish history. In contrast, the Arabs have a much more recent history in the land of Israel than the Jews do. They only arrived in the region with the Muslim conquest under Caliph Umar in 635 CE—less than 1500 years ago, while Jewish claims and rights extend back almost 4000 years. As such, Jews are not the colonizers!

In contrast, the Arab and Muslims living in the Levant came as conquerors into the Land of Israel in 635 CE (or 638) when they pushed north, east, and west out of Arabia to expand the Rashidun

Caliphate. Linguistically, we can see from both recorded history and their family names, they come from the Arabian Peninsula—Mecca and Medina are their places of origin. They came as conquering hordes who created a pan-Arab empire extending at one point from Saudi Arabia to Spain, Iraq, and beyond. They conquered our ancient cities, towns, and villages, and renamed them.

A perfect example of this is the town that Jews in antiquity referred to as “Shechem”, which today is known by its Arabs inhabitants as “Nablus”. However, Nablus is not an Arab name. The name Nablus originated under the Romans and is derived from the name of the city they built atop the ancient city of Shechem. They, the Romans, called it Neopolis, or new city, which comes down to us as Nablus. The reason that the Arabs use a post-Roman name to refer to this town is because they were not in Israel before the Romans.

The Jews who live in Israel today did not return as part of an imperial adventure. Many have deep roots in the land as they never left. There were always Jewish inhabitants in the Galilee, southern coastal plain, and elsewhere in the Land of Israel through time. Those who have come in the past 150 years are the descendants of the deportees who returned many times over the past 2500 years to reclaim their ancestral land.

The planned Nakba exhibit by the Canadian Human Rights Museum purposefully misrepresents the history, archaeology and anthropology of the region. It ignores and misrepresents the facts on the ground that the Jewish people are the long-standing indigenous people of the region (i.e., Land of Israel and surroundings) from antiquity. The Museum has the obligation to tell the origin story of the Jewish People fairly and accurately. The CMHR is obliged to tell the story of Israel’s war of self-defence against the Arab invasion in 1948. I demand in the name of fairness and justice that the CMHR recognize the depth of our history in the Land of Israel rather than continuing to perpetuate lies and distortions.

APPENDIX K

Canadian Indigenous Voices, on the Indigeneity of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel

This appendix includes extensive statements by Indigenous Canadians affirming the indigeneity of Jews to Israel and expressing concern about how that denial affects Indigenous peoples everywhere.

Ryan Bellerose from Tablet magazine in 2017 wrote about the topic of indigeneity of the Jewish people to the land of Israel. He makes it clear that recognising the Jewish people as indigenous is critical to the preservation of Indigenous peoples of North America. His letter is as follows¹:

ARE JEWS INDIGENOUS TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL? YES.

—RYAN BELLEROSE

As an indigenous activist—I am a Métis from the Paddle Prairie Metis settlement in Alberta, Canada—there is one question I am most often asked by the public, one that can instantly divide a community due to its intense and arduous subject matter.

Yet, regardless of the scenario, each time I hear the words, “Are Jews the indigenous people of Israel?” I’m inclined to answer not only with my heart but with the brutal, honest truth, backed by indisputable, thousands-year-old historical and archaeological fact: yes.

While evidence in favor of this view is overwhelming, activists who oppose Israel’s right to exist and deny the Jewish people’s

connection to the land—perhaps before learning where indigenous status stems from and what it means—still have an issue with this claim, supporting a narrative built on falsehoods that today is basically acknowledged as fact.

It is my belief that strengthening Jewish identity is the optimum way to fight against the perpetuation of false narratives and lies. This can be achieved only through an indigenous decolonization of Jewish identity, which would urge Jews to see themselves through a Jewish lens and manifest the indigenous aspects of Jewish identity in a meaningful way. Now, to understand indigeneity, one must also understand indigenous people, how we see ourselves, and how we see the world. At its simplest, indigenous status stems from the genesis of a culture, language, and traditions in conjunction with its connections to an ancestral land, most commonly derived from ties to pre-colonial peoples. Once a people have such a cultural, linguistic, and spiritual genesis as well as a coalescence as a people, they are generally acknowledged as an indigenous people.

An anthropologist named José Martínez Cobo, who served as the UN's special rapporteur on discrimination against indigenous populations, developed a simple checklist in order to make indigenous status easier to understand. Even though that checklist has since been adjusted—I would argue, to fit the UN's anti-Israel agenda—it remains the standard for most anthropologists in the field today:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present nondominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

This historical continuity may consist of the continuation, for

an extended period reaching into the present of one or more of the following factors:

- a. Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them;
- b. Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands;
- c. Culture in general, or in specific manifestations (such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.);
- d. Language (whether used as the only language, as mother tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language);
- e. Residence on certain parts of the country, or in certain regions of the world;
- f. Other relevant factors.

As a guideline, the Martínez Cobo study is fairly clear and gives us a way to avoid falling prey to false claims. However, there is one section—which, as far as I can tell, wasn't in Cobo's earliest definition—that has been referred to as problematic by many indigenous activists. This section refers to "nondominant sectors of society," which is directly related to the issue of Jews as an indigenous people. It implies that by being "nondominant," you have yet to realize self-determination. Ergo, if a group has achieved self-determination (i.e., the Jewish people or the Fijians), they will no longer meet the checklist as indigenous.

Seeing how the goal of all indigenous peoples is to achieve self-determination on their ancestral lands, it's basically the most egregious example of a Catch-22.

You might be wondering why this seemingly throwaway line about “prevailing societies and non-dominant sectors” was included when it’s so clearly counterintuitive to our goals as indigenous peoples. It is my belief that it was inserted to deny indigenous status to one specific people, in fact, the only people who have actually achieved full self-determination on their ancestral lands: the Jewish people.

Why else would the United Nations include a caveat that basically denies indigenous peoples’ identity if we actually win in our struggle?

Archaeology, genealogy, and history all support the Jewish claim to indigeneity. A debate on this issue only even exists because we’ve been fed a false narrative that Palestinian Arabs also hold a claim to the land of Israel. Not to say that two peoples can’t be indigenous to one land. The Palestinians do indeed have the legitimate “rights of longstanding presence” in Israel, but this does not trump the indigenous status of Jewish people, 90 percent of whom can directly trace their genetics to the Levant. The cultural genesis, spirituality, language, and ancestral ties of Palestinian Arabs, however, trace back to the Hejaz (a region in present-day Saudi Arabia). In the Quran, the Hejaz is where Muhammad was born and where he established a community of followers.

To say that Palestinian Arabs were the first inhabitants of the land of Israel is problematic for actual indigenous people like the Jewish people, the Amazigh, the Copts, the Assyrians, the Samaritans, and others who were forcefully conquered, subsumed, and converted. It would literally be akin to white Europeans in North America making that same claim. Conquering peoples can still become indigenous through cultural genesis and coalescence. They cannot, however, become indigenous simply through conquering indigenous people.

Indigenous status is specific to certain areas, just as in North America, where certain tribes are indigenous to specific regions. The same rules should be applied in the Middle East. Just as the Cree would not claim Mohawk territories, Arabs should not try to claim Jewish, Amazigh, Kurdish, or Assyrian territories. Each of those

peoples have clearly defined territories that date to pre-colonial times.

The primary argument promoting the false narrative that Jews are not indigenous to the land of Israel is that they are actually the descendants of European colonizers. This can be easily rebuked. Recent studies support the notion that some 80 percent of Jewish males, and 50 percent of Jewish females, can trace their ancestry to the Middle East. Early population genetics studies also confirm that “most Jewish Diaspora groups originated in the Middle East”

Another study shows that even the first European Ashkenazi Jews were at least half Middle Eastern.

The next argument against Jews being an indigenous people derives from the fact that Abraham was from Ur. And, while he is considered the father of the Jewish people, they did not become a people in Ur but in the Levant—specifically, in modern-day Judea and Samaria.

According to Jewish tradition and spirituality, the Torah was given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai, but they had their cultural Genesis in the land of Israel. Of the 613 mitzvot, the vast majority can only be completed in the land of Israel. The Patriarchs and Matriarchs of the Jewish people are all buried in the land of Israel. The holiest sites in Judaism are located—you guessed it—in the land of Israel. Abraham was indeed from Ur, but the people who stemmed from him are, without a doubt, from Israel.

This is closely related to the issue of Jerusalem, which both Palestinian Muslims and Israeli Jews claim as their own. One need only look to the Tanakh, where Jerusalem is mentioned an astounding 699 times, and then to the Quran, where Jerusalem is not mentioned even once, to resolve this dispute.

Then there is the Canaanite argument, a relatively newer piece of Palestinian propaganda that argues—because the Torah claims that the Canaanites were driven out by the Israelites—that Jews are therefore not indigenous to Israel. Archaeologists suggest, however, that the Canaanites were in fact not destroyed at all, but subsumed by the ascendant Hebrew people.

It appears that once Palestinian Arabs realized their claim to being descendants of the Philistines was false—as the Philistines, derived from the Hebrew word *peleshet*, have no connection ethnically, linguistically, or historically to the people of Arabia—they decided that they were descended from Canaanites instead.

In a 2012 speech, a spokesperson for Mahmoud Abbas said, “The nation of Palestine upon the land of Canaan had a 7,000-year history B.C.E. This is the truth, which must be understood, and we have to note it, in order to say: ‘Netanyahu, you are incidental in history. We are the people of history. We are the owners of history.’ ”

This comment from the Abbas camp is complete rubbish, just one on a laundry list of Palestinian misnomers. First, the Canaanites have been extinct for 3,000 years and little is known today about their direct descendants. Second, pre-Islamic Arabs—of whom Palestinians are direct descendants—first appeared only in the 9th century BCE, not in 7000 BCE. Third, in 1946, before the establishment of Modern Israel, Palestinian-Arab leaders themselves only claimed a connection to the land of Israel dating back no further than seventh century CE—when Muhammad’s followers conquered North Africa and the surrounding region. You may also want to ask: What spiritual, cultural, or traditional constructs of the Canaanite people have Palestinian Arabs maintained? The answer is none.

But this should not be surprising. Even the most novice researcher looking into falsehoods perpetrated by Palestinian leaders would quickly find other blatant lies aimed at delegitimizing the history of the Jewish people, like the time Yasser Arafat told Bill Clinton there was never a Jewish temple in Jerusalem, or the time Ekrima Sabri, former Jerusalem mufti and chairman of the Supreme Islamic Council in Jerusalem, said, “After 25 years of digging, archaeologists are unanimous that not a single stone has been found related to Jerusalem’s alleged Jewish history.”

These are the proponents of the false narrative attempting to rebuke the indigenous status of the Jewish people in the land of Israel.

I got involved in this struggle because I was seeing nonindigenous people make arguments that are detrimental to actual indigenous people, arguments that attempt to rewrite our history. The idea that "Palestinian Arab" conquerors could become indigenous through conquering the Jewish people, even though the term "Palestinian" was only used in reference to Jews before 1948, is anathema. While Arabs claim to be related to the descendants of Israel through blood, it's just another way to say that they acted like all conquerors, raping and pillaging and then settling and subsuming the locals. Native North Americans especially understand that simply conquering indigenous people does not grant one indigenous status.

Building a monument over our sacred places does not make them yours (Mount Rushmore, anyone?) Not any more than UNESCO declaring the Temple Mount to be a Muslim sacred site because they built a mosque over the church that was built over the ruins of the Jewish Temple. It's a basic tradition in the Western ethos to respect those who came before you; it's even built into most of our laws to respect prior claim, and that's what indigenous rights are really all about. Respecting the rights of those who came before you.

Harry LaForme and Karen Restoule wrote in a special to the National Post in 2024 about the paralleled rhetoric that first the Nazis used against the Jewish people, which then morphed into language used against the Indigenous peoples of Canada by the Canadian Government, and how it is being reused now by the anti-Israel protesters to demonise the Jewish People and Israel. They make it clear that many Indigenous peoples are indeed Zionists. The article follows below²:

OPINION: WE ARE ANISHINAABE ZIONISTS.

HATEFUL ANTI-ISRAEL CAMPS DISRESPECT OUR LANDS

—HARRY LAFORME AND KAREN RESTOULE

We reject using the words ‘colonizer,’ ‘settler’ and ‘decolonize’ to justify terror, violence, kidnapping and rape.

As Anishinaabe, we strive to adhere to our traditional values. The Creator placed the distinct races of humankind upon Mother Earth and gifted each with unique knowledge to be used for their benefit and to be shared for the benefit of all humankind. The Seven Sacred Teachings were given to us so that we may learn how to live and move forward together in a good way.

Indigenous peoples welcomed the settlers to Turtle Island. Our original relationship was based upon mutual respect, honour, equality, peaceful coexistence, and the sharing of the land; its resources and wisdom. Treaties of Peace and Friendship were signed that codified these intentions and stressed peaceful and equal coexistence. In the mid 1700s, Britain unilaterally decided to govern the interior of North America by its own rules and ignored agreements negotiated through alliance and treaty. In 1763, Chief Pontiac led a coordinated attack of Indigenous groups on British forts in Upper Great Lakes Region and unsettled the British reign. Chief Pontiac was not trying to run Europeans out of the region but to restore the terms of alliance and treaty. Chief Pontiac’s military successes lead to the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the 1764 Treaty of Niagara; the original relationship was reaffirmed.

Tragically, in the early to mid-1800s Canada ignored the treaties and abandoned the original relationship. Canada developed policies and laws that disenfranchised, oppressed, and marginalized Indigenous peoples as exemplified by the Indian Residential School System, the Indian Act and the common law adoption of the false Doctrine of Discovery. Indigenous peoples were made "wards of the state" and faced assimilation and cultural genocide. In 1910, Deputy Superintendent General, Department of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott, responding to the appalling high death rate of children in Indian Residential Schools, stated, "this alone does not justify a change in the policy of this Department, which is geared towards the final solution of our Indian problem." The Nazis aggressively deployed the term "final solution" in a manner similar to Canada.

Today, throughout our Treaty Lands are campus signs and chants that include the following: "There is only one solution Intifada revolution." The phrase Canada used in the 1910s and the Nazis in WWII has been carefully adapted and callously adopted. Any Indigenous person and non-Indigenous Canadian aware of our shared history should shudder to hear it chanted and see it on our campuses. As Anishinaabe, we find the term, in all of its iterations, offensive, hateful and racist. It takes us back to a dark chapter in our shared history here in Canada; marked by the death of more than 6,000 Indigenous children. It also reminds us of the tragic loss of six million Jews across Europe during, and in the period leading up to, the Holocaust. These calls for the death of Jewish people are unequivocally anathema to The Seven Sacred Teachings.

Nevertheless, the Europeans arriving on our shores were welcomed to Turtle Island and the Treaties of Peace and Friendship reflect this truth. Indigenous and early European inhabitants lived together in accordance with them for centuries and they continue to be in effect today. To us, reconciliation is returning to the original intention of the treaties and restoring the original relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. We

are all treaty partners and signatories to the Treaties of Peace and Friendship. The values embodied in these treaties govern the relationships that all of us have with each other. They apply to universities and to the broader society.

The Honour of the Crown and the goal of reconciliation are central to the Crown's relationship with Indigenous peoples. Canada recognizes that: "All relations with Indigenous peoples need to be based on the recognition and implementation of their right to self-determination." Universities say they recognize Indigenous self-determination, and respect their rights and the Treaties that govern these Lands.

As Anishinaabe, Mother Earth is our first Mother. The Land has spiritual essence and we are its custodians. Indigenous people have a constitutional "say" in how our Treaty Lands are used. Canada and the provinces have a "duty to consult" with us when our Treaty Lands are going to be used. Universities have willingly assumed this duty to consult.

Six universities reside on the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN). Land acknowledgments and adoption of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls-to-Action are displayed on their websites. Universities recognize the Indigenous peoples whose territories they sit on. Land acknowledgments express gratitude to the land for the water and food that sustains us, trees to shelter us and paths to connect us. Land acknowledgements are today's flavoured refrain. At public events, universities display their fidelity to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and commit to "make space" for Indigenous knowledge and culture in their policies and governance. They express awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights but too often the statements seem rote and fall short of respecting the Treaties that govern our lands.

Five of the six universities on the MCFN Treaty Lands have pro-Palestinian encampments on them. Not one consulted the MCFN about encampments being set up on our Treaty Lands. Not one consulted the MCFN about the manner in which encampment occupiers and pro-Palestinian protesters behave on our Treaty Lands.

No consultation took place about excluding Jewish and Zionist students and faculty from any part of our Treaty Lands or limiting their use and enjoyment of our Treaty Lands. Exclusion, bigotry, harassment, antisemitism, lawlessness, and hate are being permitted on and throughout our Treaty Lands. All of which is contrary to The Seven Sacred Teachings, the Rule of Law in Canada, and disregard the duty to consult and the essence of land acknowledgements.

As Anishinaabe, we are troubled by the expressions of hatred against Jews and Zionists, and the disappointing ignorance, fuelled by misinformation coming from universities. Ignorance about the indigeneity of the Jewish people in the region that is Israel. Ignorance about the values that Israel, as a democracy, stands for—as imperfect as it is. Ignorance about the rights and responsibilities Israel has as a nation state and member of the United Nations. Ignorance about Zionism—its compatibility with Palestinian self-determination, a two-state solution, and the fact that the vast majority of Jewish people identify with Israel. Ignorance about the current reconciliation efforts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Ignorance about our shared history and the intentions of our original relationship. And how quickly the sadistic savagery of Hamas’ invasion of Israel and its promises to repeat October 7 again and again and again are forgotten. Erroneous false narratives are coming out of universities about current reconciliation efforts led by Indigenous peoples to justify divisive hateful conduct that overwhelmingly targets and isolates Jewish and Zionist Canadians. The use of sacred ceremonies such as the lighting of a Sacred Fire, smudging, drumming, and others, by activists in encampments on university campuses are not appropriate. It is cultural appropriation and historical distortion of the worst kind.

Some have suggested correlations between Hamas and Israel in the Middle East and the reconciliation work led by First Nations here in Canada in the West. We hear the words “colonizer,” “settler” and “decolonize” to justify terror, violence, kidnapping, rape and targeted civilian massacres. These words are used to assert revolutionary

violence “by any means necessary” and that “all forms of resistance” are justified. We unequivocally reject these assertions and any allyship with those who hold such views.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous people found ways and continue to find ways to peacefully resolve their differences mostly through dialogue grounded in The Seven Sacred Teachings. But little respectful dialogue is heard. Instead, we see hate, antisemitism, and weak leadership on university campuses. Pro-Palestinian supporters violate the Treaties with Indigenous peoples and The Seven Sacred Teachings. Allegedly they seek to resolve a crisis in the Middle East by means that disregard Indigenous peoples, the Treaties, our Sacred Teachings, and our relationship with Canada. Equally dreadful are the measures that target Jewish and Zionist students and faculty—people who are welcome on our Treaty Lands and are deserving of the rights and freedoms enjoyed by all Canadians.

Our Land, the Treaties, our values, and our hospitality are being abused. Leaders of universities, government, and law enforcement—all considered to be Treaty Partners—are allowing this to happen. University codes of conduct and Canadian laws are not being enforced. It appears that all protest activity is treated as “free speech” by those who carry responsibility for the public. The focus is on whether the “speech” is free and protected, rather than on whether the conduct or speech aligns with the Treaties or The Seven Sacred Teachings.

We, as Anishinaabe Zionists, are made to feel unwelcome on our Treaty Lands by treaty scofflaws and encampment occupiers, who self describe as part of the current colonial regime that marginalizes and oppresses Indigenous peoples—us. Perhaps, they should begin an examination of the illogic of their own activities on our ancestral Treaty Lands.

A modern-day Chief Pontiac is needed who respects all and fears none.

Our Treaty partners must enforce the law and codes of conduct on campuses and communities across the country. Codes of conduct

consistent with the Treaties and The Seven Sacred Teachings should be developed. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism must be applied by all who fall within areas of federal oversight, influence, and authority. Indigenous people should be consulted with about how Treaty Lands will be used. Universities must stop the false narratives. Facts, reality, truth—not fiction, feelings and ideology—should be taught.

The preceding is Harry Laforme’s and Karen Restoule’s written submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights’ Study of Antisemitism.

ARTICLE CONTENT: *LaForme is a member of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), a retired appellate court judge and practicing lawyer. Restoule is a member of the Dokis First Nation. With a law degree from the University of Ottawa, Restoule specializes in public affairs and is currently a vice president with Crestview Strategy. Ms. Restoule is also an honorary witness to Israeli suffering arising out of the Hamas October 7 attack.*

This next article is by Ariela Karmel and was published in *The Times of Israel* in 2025. It is a speech by Harry LaForme that discusses the shared experiences of Indigenous peoples of Canada and Jewish people. It reaffirms that Israel is not a settler colonial state, as many would believe and that Israel should be viewed as a successful indigenous reclamation of land. The article is as follows³:

**AN ANISHINAABE ZIONIST ON HOW INDIGENOUS HISTORY IS
WEAPONIZED TO PROMOTE ANTISEMITISM.**

—ARIEL A KARMEL & HARRY LAFORME

On his first visit to Israel, Canada's first Indigenous appellate court justice Harry LaForme explains why he sees the Jewish state as an Indigenous triumph, not a colonial enterprise.

Retired Canadian judge Harry LaForme stood at a podium in Tel Aviv and began his remarks with a familiar ritual, but one rarely heard in Israel: a land acknowledgement.

"We are gathered here today," he said. "In the homeland of the Indigenous Jewish people."

In Canada, land acknowledgments are a common way to begin public addresses—a formal recognition of the Indigenous peoples on whose traditional territories an event is taking place. But this time, LaForme was far from home, delivering his words not in Ontario, but as part of the keynote address at Tel Aviv University's Annual Democracy Forum in May, hosted by the Irwin Cotler Institute.

For LaForme, a member of the Anishinaabe Nation and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and a self-described "Indigenous Zionist," the connection was instinctive: "I don't know of anyone who can claim indigeneity more than the Jewish people in Israel," he said.

The jurist was on his first visit to Israel, a trip he described as "a dream come true."

"We learned all about this impossible country," he said. "Our love for it grew."

As the first Indigenous judge appointed to an appellate court in

Canada, LaForme's life and legal career have been shaped by "the shadow of settler colonialism," which he says contributed to the deep kinship that he feels to Jewish people and their "ancestral homeland."

The notion of an "Indigenous Zionist," let alone a First Nations justice, finding deep common cause with Jewish Israelis, may seem to some counterintuitive or even provocative, particularly in Canada, where parallels between Palestinians and Indigenous peoples have become a powerful talking point among pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel activists, many of whom frame Israel as a settler-colonial project. Today, rhetoric surrounding Israel often morphs to adopt the dominant moral vocabulary of the society in which it appears. In the United States, it's framed through the lens of systemic racism; in South Africa, apartheid; in Europe, Nazism.

In Canada, where colonialism and policies to erase First Nations' cultures are widely acknowledged as foundational national sins, Israel is cast as a stand-in for colonial guilt, a way to absolve and redirect collective shame over Indigenous suffering.

For LaForme, whose culture, history and identity are often invoked as political talking points, it is deeply offensive.

"The [Jewish people's] history is obvious—it goes back at least 4,000 years, and I don't understand Canada's reluctance to recognize this," he said. "But people aren't interested in history."

The activists making arguments against this history, he noted, are rarely Indigenous themselves and see no irony in appropriating the grievances of First Nations to agitate for a foreign conflict.

"My people are too busy trying to survive and getting clean water on their reserves," he said. "But my chief and council know exactly what is true."

LaForme sees these tactics as violating the very spirit of the Treaties that form the foundation of Canada's relationship with First Nations.

"Our land, the Treaties, our values, and our hospitality are being abused and pirated by treaty scofflaws," he said.

“As an Anishinaabe Zionist, I am being made to feel unwelcome on my Treaty Lands by anti-Israel/pro-Palestinian treaty violators who self-describe as part of the current colonial settler regime that marginalizes and oppresses Indigenous peoples—me. They should examine the illogic of their own activities on my ancestral and Treaty Lands.”

A JUDGE SHAPED BY INJUSTICE

LaForme’s deep identification with Israel—and his fierce rejection of the claim that it is a settler-colonial state—is rooted not in theory, but in personal history.

Born under the Indian Act—a sweeping Canadian law that governed nearly every aspect of First Nations life—LaForme remembers a childhood shaped by control and constraint.

“Our land isn’t our land,” he said. “The legal title is vested in His Majesty.” Indian agents, appointed by the federal government, presided over council meetings and made land-use decisions for Indigenous communities.

As a child, the jurist says that he “spent a lot of time trying to avoid being Indian.” It wasn’t until his twenties, while coaching a youth basketball team of Indigenous kids, that something shifted.

“They were so proud of who they were,” he recalled. “I learned so much from them about being Indigenous.”

When LaForme entered law school in the 1970s, there were only a handful of Indigenous students nationwide in higher education. Some had to renounce their legal Indian status to attend university. When he graduated from Osgoode Hall at York University in 1977, just four Indigenous lawyers were practicing in all of Canada.

He went on to found one of the country’s first Indigenous law practices, representing Indigenous communities across the world and appearing before international bodies including the United Nations in Geneva and the British Parliament.

Throughout his legal career, LaForme felt like an outsider and, more often than not, the lone Indigenous justice in Canadian

courtrooms. But it was among Jewish peers, who knew what it felt like to be “othered,” that he found a sense of belonging.

“I had an audience with Jewish colleagues,” he said. “They identified with my otherness. Social justice was a real concern for these judges, as it was for me. Our thinking tended to be aligned. They became my haven—my go-to people.”

LaForme became the first Indigenous judge to serve on an appellate court in Canada when Irwin Cotler, the former Canadian justice minister and internationally known human rights advocate, appointed him to the Ontario Court of Justice in 1994.

“I asked him at the time, ‘Why me?’” LaForme recalled. “He said, ‘Who better to know what justice is than someone who’s lived their life without it?’”

On the bench, LaForme led a storied career as a liberal jurist, authoring several precedent-setting rulings on civil liberties, including a groundbreaking exemption for medical cannabis use and a decision that helped pave the way for the legalization of same-sex marriage in Canada, which he says was impacted by his own experience being marginalized.

He was widely seen as a top contender for the Supreme Court, but was blocked by a 2016 rule requiring justices to be fluent in French—a language LaForme notes with irony was never taught to him under the very education system imposed by the colonial state.

He retired from the judiciary in 2018, but never stopped fighting for Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

“I would do my life all over again if I had the chance” and not change a thing, he said.

SHARED TRAUMAS, SHARED HOPES

LaForme said over the years he came to feel a profound kinship with Jewish identity and history.

“I can identify with the horrors that the Jewish people went through constantly,” he said.

He drew clear parallels between the Holocaust and Canada’s

residential school system.

The ruthless schools “destroyed the lives of 150,000 people,” he said. “We have unmarked graves that we’re still trying to find.”

From the 1880s onward, more than 150,000 Indigenous or First Nations children were forcibly taken from their families and placed in government and church-run residential schools, where many suffered physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and about 6,000 died. The last residential school was only closed in 1998, and mass graves of First Nations children who died at the schools have been discovered in recent years.

While the Canadian government has issued formal apologies, LaForme said public understanding remains shallow.

“Just like October 7—it is forgotten,” he said. “Our histories are different, but there are so many similarities in terms of the emotional impact and intergenerational trauma.”

Since the Hamas-led October 7, 2023, attacks, Canada has seen a massive spike in antisemitic incidents, reaching a historic high in 2024. There were 6,219 reported cases including firebombing of synagogues, attacks on schools and Jewish-owned businesses, and several arrests of suspects on terror-related charges, according to the B’nai Brith organization’s annual report published in April.

LaForme is deeply concerned about the “tsunami of Jew hatred” he has witnessed and said Jewish friends have confided to him that they no longer feel safe.

He was particularly disturbed by protest chants like “There’s only one solution, intifada revolution”—a phrase, he noted, which is chillingly close to colonial-era policies like the “final solution to the Indian problem” once declared by Canadian official Duncan Campbell Scott in 1910, regarding the high death rate of children in Indian Residential Schools. The term final solution was later notoriously used by the Nazis regarding the Jews.

“Any Indigenous person and non-Indigenous Canadian aware of our shared history should shudder to hear those words chanted

on our streets," he said. "The term, in all its iterations, is offensive, hateful, and racist."

Most egregious to him is that his people's history and struggles are being invoked, in his view, to legitimize antisemitism.

"After October 7, I observed how in Canada, Anishinaabe culture and traditions were being appropriated by anti-Israel/pro-Palestinian demonstrators to justify the unjustifiable," he said during his speech. "I am deeply troubled by the expressions of hatred against Jews and Zionists, and the willful, disappointing and overt ignorance, fueled by misinformation coming from educational institutions and broader society."

For Jewish Israelis, many of whom are descendants of, or themselves, refugees from the Middle East, the suggestion that they are European colonizers is often met with derision.

But the accusation has found traction around the world and has been used to incite violence against both Israelis and Jewish communities.

"These words are used to assert revolutionary violence 'by any means necessary,'" he said. "I unequivocally reject these assertions and any allyship with those who hold such views."

"I know what settler colonialism looks like," he said. "I've lived under its thumb." That background, he said, makes him especially attuned to what such oppression looks like, and skeptical when the term is misused.

Which is also why, for Canada's first and most senior Indigenous justice, Israel is not an example of settler-colonialism but one of the rare—perhaps only—examples of an Indigenous people reclaiming sovereignty over their ancestral land, and a source of inspiration for his own.

"We're looking for land back and the right to govern that land. We're not asking you to get out of the country, but let us govern our reserves," he said. "That's true reconciliation."

APPENDIX L

Muslims Against Antisemitism

Raheel Raza is one of the directors of The Council for Muslims Against Antisemitism. On Feb 28th, 2026, she published an article in the Winnipeg Jewish Review on this problematic exhibit; it is reproduced in full below¹.

RAHEEL RAZA AND SHUKRI HILOWLE OF THE COUNCIL FOR MUSLIMS AGAINST ANTISEMITISM: TIMING MATTERS: WHY A NAKBA EXHIBIT RISKS DEEPENING DIVISIONS

The proposal to establish a Nakba exhibit at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg raises serious concerns about balance, timing, and Canada's role in a volatile global conflict. At a moment of escalating violence in the Middle East—including the widening confrontation between Israel and Iran and its proxies—Canada should be exercising measured leadership, not amplifying one side of an unresolved war.

Canada has long cultivated a reputation as a principled middle power committed to peacekeeping, neutrality, and post-conflict reconciliation. Its response to the 1994 Rwandan genocide—though imperfect—ultimately reinforced the importance of sober reflection, international accountability, and structured reconciliation after violence ends. Canada's own Truth and Reconciliation Commission demonstrated that durable healing requires investigation, inclusion, and participation by all affected communities.

Mounting a Nakba exhibit in the midst of violence, hardly fosters reconciliation. Post-conflict truth commissions work precisely because they follow investigation, cessation of violence, and participation from all sides. That process has not yet occurred in Israel and Palestine.

By contrast, the proposed exhibition, *Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present*, scheduled to open in June 2026, risks entrenching a singular narrative while a war is still unfolding. The Nakba—meaning “catastrophe”—refers to the displacement of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab Israeli war. That history is real and deserves study. But presenting it in isolation, particularly if Israel is depicted solely through the lens of settler-colonialism, reduces a profoundly complex and contested conflict into a one-dimensional morality play.

Museums dedicated to human rights carry a special responsibility. They must illuminate, not inflame. They must contextualize, not polarize. An exhibit focused exclusively on Palestinian dispossession, without equal treatment of Jewish historical trauma, regional wars initiated by neighboring states, terrorism, and failed peace efforts, risks importing the conflict into Canada’s own social fabric.

Canada today supports both Palestinian self-determination and Israel’s right to security. It has avoided assigning exclusive blame and has backed international legal processes examining both Hamas and the current Israeli government. A Nakba exhibit, at this juncture, risks undermining that balanced approach.

There is nothing inherently wrong with documenting Palestinian history or suffering. Indeed, acknowledging human pain is essential to justice. But timing matters. Context matters. Inclusivity matters even more. If Canada wishes to contribute meaningfully to peace, it should support initiatives that bring Israelis and Palestinians together in shared dialogue and post-conflict reconciliation—not projects that may deepen division while the war still rages.

Human rights institutions must rise above advocacy and resist becoming instruments of contemporary political campaigns. The path to peace will require difficult truths from all sides. A museum committed to human rights should reflect that complexity, not simplify it.

APPENDIX M

A Documented Response to the “Israel Apartheid” Slander: Origins, Refutations, and Facts

Among other delegitimizing epithets directed at the Jewish state, some members of the Content Advisory Committee have used the term “Apartheid state”. Not only is the comparison of Israel to South Africa’s apartheid regime a false analogy, but in this appendix, we will prove why.

I. WHERE THE “APARTHEID” SLANDER BEGAN

The accusation that Israel is an “apartheid state” did not arise organically from human-rights scholarship. It was manufactured as a political weapon through a deliberate, decades-long campaign rooted in Soviet-era propaganda and later institutionalised at the United Nations.

1975: “ZIONISM IS RACISM”.

In 1975, the Soviet and Arab blocs in the UN General Assembly sponsored Resolution 3379, which branded Zionism as “a *form of racism*”¹. The resolution was revoked in 1991 by General Assembly Resolution 46/86, but the strategy and memory of equating Jewish self-determination with racial oppression had been planted².

2001: THE DURBAN CONFERENCE.

The decisive moment in this story came at the 2001 UN World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa. A parallel NGO Forum was hijacked by anti-Israel activists. The Forum’s final

declaration branded Israel a “*racist, apartheid state*”. Copies of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were sold on conference grounds. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is a falsified, ahistorical document whose purpose is to spread antisemitic rhetoric and ideals. Both the United States and Israel withdrew their delegations³.

*“The indictment of Israel as an apartheid state was born in Durban. It was triggered in Durban. Durban became the tipping point for the demonological antisemitism that we see today, where Israel is blamed for all the evils of the world, that Israel and the Jewish people are the enemy of good, the embodiment of all those evils”*⁴—IRWIN COTLER, FORMER CANADIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND LEGAL SCHOLAR.

2005–PRESENT: BDS AND NGO AMPLIFICATION.

The Durban Conference spawned the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement in 2005, and it was subsequently amplified by well-funded NGOs⁵. Critics such as NGO Monitor have documented various NGOs’ systematic distortions and prejudices while attempting to promote BDS^{6 7}.

II. ISRAEL’S FOUNDING COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (MAY 14, 1948).

Israel’s Declaration of Independence explicitly guarantees equal rights for all inhabitants⁸:

“THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion,

race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture”—ISRAEL’S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, 1948.

The Declaration also directly appealed to Israel’s Arab population:

“WE APPEAL—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions”—ISRAEL’S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, 1948.

No comparable document existed in apartheid South Africa. The South African system was built on the explicit legal premise that non-whites were inferior and had no right to equal citizenship⁹.

III. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK: COURTS UPHOLD EQUALITY

BASIC LAW: HUMAN DIGNITY AND LIBERTY (1992).

Israel’s Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty functions as a quasi-constitutional charter¹⁰. The Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that human dignity encompasses the right to individual equality.

“First, to the extent that this claim comes to say that the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish State (which constitute a general purpose at the foundation of the law) conflict with the principle of equality, the answer is that such a conflict does not exist. Indeed, we do not accept the approach that the values of the State of Israel, as a Jewish state, would justify—on the level of a general purpose—discrimination by the State between its citizens, on the basis of religion or nationality. The Basic Law: Human

*Dignity and Liberty (s. 1) provides that...*¹¹ —CHIEF JUSTICE AHARON BARAK, ON BEHALF OF THE SUPREME COURT OF ISRAEL, KA’ADAN V. ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION.

KA’ADAN V. ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION (2000).

In this landmark case, the Supreme Court of Israel ruled that an Arab family could not be denied the right to live in a community built on state-allocated land. The Court held that equality is “*one of the foundational principles of the State of Israel*”¹². Legal scholars compared this ruling to *Brown v. Board of Education*. In apartheid South Africa, such a ruling would have been legally impossible.

IV. THE NATION-STATE LAW (2018): CONTROVERSY IN CONTEXT

Critics frequently cite the 2018 Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People as evidence of institutional discrimination. An honest assessment requires understanding what the law actually says, how it fits within Israel’s broader constitutional framework, and how the Supreme Court has interpreted it.

WHAT THE LAW PROVIDES.

The Nation-State Law is a declarative Basic Law that codifies the Jewish character of the state¹³; it is presented below in the form of the Unofficial English translation by Dr. Sheila Hattis Rolef. To read the law in its original Hebrew, please see the Knesset’s records¹⁴.

1. Basic principles:
 - a. The Land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish People, in which the State of Israel was established.
 - b. The State of Israel is the nation state of the Jewish People in which it realizes its natural, cultural, religious and historical right to self-determination.

- c. The realization of the right to national selfdetermination in the State of Israel is exclusive to the Jewish People.
- 2. The symbols of the State:
 - a. The name of the State is “Israel”
 - b. The State flag is white, with two light-blue stripes close to the edges, and a light-blue Star of David in the centre.
 - c. The State emblem is a seven-branched menorah with olive leaves on both sides, and the word “Israel” beneath it.
 - d. The national anthem is “Hatikvah”.
 - e. Details regarding the State symbols shall be prescribed by law.
- 3. The capital of the State:
 - a. The complete and united Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.
- 4. Language:
 - a. Hebrew is the language of the State.
 - b. Arabic has a special status in the State. Regulation of the use of Arabic in state institutions or in contacts with them shall be prescribed by law.
 - c. Nothing in this article shall compromise the status given to the Arabic language in practice, before this basic-law came into force.

5. Ingathering of the exiles:
 - a. The State shall be open to Jewish immigration, and the ingathering of the exiles.
6. The connection to the Jewish People:
 - a. The State shall strive to secure the welfare of members of the Jewish People and of its citizens, who are in straits and in captivity, due to their Jewishness or due to their citizenship.
 - b. The State shall act in the Diaspora, to strengthen the affinity between the State and members of the Jewish People.
 - c. The State shall act to preserve the cultural, historical, and religious heritage of the Jewish People among Jews of the Diaspora.
7. Jewish settlement:
 - a. The State views the development of Jewish settlement as a national value, and shall act to encourage and promote its establishment and consolidation.
8. Official calendar:
 - a. The Hebrew calendar is the official calendar of the State, and side by side with it, the Gregorian calendar shall be used as an official calendar. The use of the Hebrew calendar and the Gregorian calendar shall be prescribed by law.

9. Independence Day and memorial days:
 - a. Independence Day is the official national holiday of the State.
 - b. Memorial Day for the Fallen in Israel's Wars, and the Remembrance Day for the Holocaust and Martyrdom, are official memorial days of the State.
10. Days of rest and statutory holidays:
 - a. The Sabbath and the Jewish holidays are the established days of rest in the State. Those who are not Jewish have the right to keep days of rest on their days of rest and holidays. Details regarding this matter shall be prescribed by law.
11. Rigidity:
 - a. This basic-law may not be changed save by means of a basic-law, adopted by a majority of the Knesset Members.

WHAT THE LAW DOES NOT PROVIDE.

The law does not create any operative provisions that confer or deny personal rights based on national affiliation. It does not restrict voting, education, healthcare, employment, or access to the courts. It does not repeal or modify any existing Basic Law protecting individual rights.

In July 2021, the Supreme Court, sitting in an expanded panel of 11 justices, rejected 15 petitions in a 10-1 ruling (HCJ 5555/18, Hason v. Knesset). President Hayut wrote¹⁵:

“This basic law is but one chapter in our constitution taking shape and it does not negate Israel’s character as a democratic

state”. [The law, the court added, does not discriminate against ’48 Palestinians nor does it deny them rights, since] *“equal rights are granted to all citizens of the state, including minority groups,”* [and the right to national self-determination of Jews] *“does not deny recognised personal or cultural rights [of others]”*”. Supreme Court President Esther Hayut, majority opinion, July 2021, in italics. Explained by Lana Tatour.

The Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Basic Law: The Nation must be interpreted with the goal of constitutional harmony among all Basic Laws¹⁶. The Nation-State Law must be read together with Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, which incorporates the right to equality¹⁷. The Court also decreed in majority opinion *“that this section is not intended to legalize the discrimination and exclusion of non-Jews from state lands”*¹⁸. On the Arabic language, the Court confirmed the drafters’ intent to maintain Arabic’s existing practical status without diminishment¹⁹.

CRITICISM AND CONTEXT.

The law’s critics—including the Israel Democracy Institute, Druze community leaders, and Justice George Kara (the sole dissenter)—argued that the law should also explicitly enshrine equality²⁰. This criticism has merit as a democratic best practice. However, that is a complaint about what the law omits, not what it enacts. The Basic Law: The Nation does not establish racial separation, legal inequality, or differential citizenship—the hallmarks of apartheid.

As legal scholar Eugene Kontorovich has documented, seven EU member states (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Ireland) have comparable constitutional provisions on “nationhood”²¹. None of those countries is referred to as an apartheid state.

V. THE FACTS: ARAB CITIZENS IN ISRAELI SOCIETY

The reality of daily life for Israel’s Arab citizens, who make up approximately 21% of the population, causes the apartheid comparison to break down.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION.

- Arab citizens have had full voting rights since 1948. Over 100 Arab and Druze members have served in the Knesset²².
- In 2021, Ra’am (United Arab List) became the first independent Arab party to join an Israeli governing coalition²³.
- In apartheid South Africa, Black citizens were entirely barred from voting for the national government²⁴.

THE JUDICIARY.

Arab citizens serve as judges at every level, including the Supreme Court. Justice Salim Joubran (Christian Arab) and Justice Khaled Kaboub (Muslim) have both served on the Supreme Court^{25 26}.

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONS.

A 2025 study in the Israel Journal of Health Policy Research documented Arab representation among healthcare professionals²⁷:

PROFESSION	ARAB PERCENTAGE (2023)
PHYSICIANS	25%
NURSES	27%
DENTISTS	27%
PHARMACISTS	49%

Source: Rosen & Miaari, Israel Journal of Health Policy Research, 2025

LIFE EXPECTANCY: THE HIGHEST IN THE ARAB- MUSLIM WORLD.

According to the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, the life expectancy of Arabs in Israel (~79 years) is the highest in the Arab-Muslim world, comparable to Qatar and the UAE²⁸. Israel’s national health insurance covers all citizens equally²⁹. Arab infant mortality in Israel has declined from 9.8 deaths per 1,000 births in 1995 to less than 6.5 per 1,000 today³⁰. In 1948, it was 62.5 deaths per 1,000 births, and in 1955, it was 20.5 per 1,000³¹.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE RIGHTS.

- Arabic has a special status. Arab students are educated in Arabic-language schools within the public system³².
- Arab students attend all Israeli universities. In 2022–23, 70% of pharmacy students and 33% of nursing students were Arab³³.
- Under South Africa’s Bantu Education Act, a deliberately inferior education system was created for Black students³⁴.

MILITARY, DIPLOMACY, AND PUBLIC LIFE.

- Druze and Bedouin citizens serve in the IDF in senior command positions. In addition, Israel has appointed Arab ambassadors and diplomats, including Ishmael Khaldi, the first Bedouin diplomat³⁵.
- All citizens use the same hospitals, public transport, beaches, shopping centres, and universities. By contrast, under South African apartheid, every aspect of public life was segregated by law.

VI. HONEST ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: THE INCOME GAP AND ISRAEL'S RESPONSE

Intellectual honesty requires acknowledging that the average income for Arab Israeli citizens is lower than the national average. However:

- The gap is not unique to Arab citizens. Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) Jewish communities show similar patterns. The gap reflects socioeconomic disparities, not a racial caste system.
- Unlike apartheid South Africa, where inequality was enforced by law, the Israeli government has launched massive programs to close the gap.

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION 922 (2015–2021).

A revolutionary five-year plan worth ~NIS 13 billion (~\$4 billion) was adopted by a right-wing coalition to close economic gaps. The Bank of Israel analysis found that ~70% of budgets were utilised, with education at 90% utilisation³⁶. According to a Bank of Israel press release from 2024, *“In the years of the program’s implementation, the gap between Arab and Jewish society narrowed considerably in many areas of the program”*³⁷.

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION 550 / “TAKADUM” PLAN (2021–2026)

A successor plan with ~NIS 30 billion (~\$9 billion)—more than double the investment of the original program. Named “Takadum” (“progress” in Arabic), it was developed by 12 government teams with Arab local authorities. It covers education, employment, transportation, housing, healthcare, welfare, and hi-tech integration^{38 39}.

An apartheid state does not invest billions in closing economic gaps for the population it supposedly oppresses.

VII. WHAT APARTHEID ACTUALLY WAS

Invoking “apartheid” to describe Israel is an insult to millions of Black South Africans who suffered under that system. South Africa enacted racist legislation with no parallel in Israeli law⁴⁰:

- Population Registration Act (1950): Classified every South African by race at birth⁴¹.
- Group Areas Act (1950): Assigned racial groups to specific residential areas⁴².
- Bantu Education Act (1953): Created a deliberately inferior education system for Blacks⁴³.
- Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949): Criminalised interracial marriage⁴⁴.
- Pass Laws: Required non-whites to carry identity documents controlling their movement⁴⁵.

None of these apartheid laws have any parallel in Israeli legislation.

“There are many Christians that support Israel, but they don’t come out... Those who know what real apartheid is, as I know, know that there is nothing in Israel that looks like apartheid”... “There is a widespread allegation, really a slander, that Israel is an apartheid state. That notion is simply wrong. It is inaccurate and it is malicious”, Kenneth Meshoe, Member of the South African Parliament⁴⁶.

VIII. THE WEST BANK: OCCUPATION IS NOT APARTHEID

Critics most frequently invoke the apartheid label regarding the West Bank, a territory under Israeli military control since 1967. An honest assessment requires understanding the legal framework and the distinction between occupation and apartheid.

THE OSLO ACCORDS FRAMEWORK.

The legal architecture for the West Bank was established by the Oslo Accords (1993 and 1995), signed by Israel and the PLO, and witnessed by the United States^{47 48}. It is divided into three areas:

- Area A (~18%) of the West Bank: Full Palestinian Authority civil and security control. Entry is forbidden to Israeli citizens.
- Area B (~22%) of the West Bank: PA civil control with joint Israeli-Palestinian security control.
- Area C (~60%) of the West Bank: Full Israeli civil and security control, including Israeli settlements.

The PLO explicitly agreed to this as a transitional framework. The majority of Palestinians in the West Bank live under Palestinian Authority civil governance, not direct Israeli rule.

THE KEY DISTINCTION: CITIZENSHIP, NOT ETHNICITY.

Within the territories, legal distinctions are drawn between citizens of Israel and non-citizens, not between Arabs and Jews. Israeli citizens (settlers) are subject to Israeli civilian law; Palestinian residents are subject to PA law (Areas A/B) or military administration (Area C). An Arab citizen of Israel who enters the West Bank has the same legal status as a Jewish citizen of Israel. The distinction follows citizenship, not ethnicity, making this situation fundamentally different from apartheid, where the dividing line was always and exclusively race.

OPERATING ON DISPUTED LAND AND EMPLOYING APARTHEID ARE DIFFERENT THINGS.

The Oslo Accords divide the West Bank into three zones, as discussed above. It is important to note that Area A is fully controlled by the Palestinian Authority when it comes to policing and administration, with its inhabitants retaining Palestinian Identification Cards and, if they so choose, a Palestinian Passport⁴⁹. Area B is still fully controlled by the P.A. administratively, while security control is shared with Israel, and Israel has full control of Area C. For all intents and purposes, the West Bank can be considered disputed territory, placing it into a recognised category under International Humanitarian Law. The following countries were all at one time functioning in disputed territory: the USA in post-war Germany and Japan, Turkey in Northern Cyprus, Morocco in the Western Sahara, and Russia in Crimea; none of these countries was ever accused of employing a system of “apartheid”.

This does not mean that people living in disputed territory are living free of hardship. Restrictions on Palestinian movement, the permit system, and settlement growth are subjects of vigorous debate, even within Israel itself and in its courts, parliament, and press. However, characterising the issues that ensue when a temporary document from 1995 (Oslo Accords) remains as the governing document for the disputed territory as “apartheid”—a system of domestic racial supremacy—is a deliberate conflation designed to delegitimise, not to clarify. Had the P.A. ever meaningfully returned to the negotiation table, with a desire to live peacefully alongside Israel, it would have had its own state, and we would not be in this situation.

IX. VOICES FROM WITHIN: ARAB, DRUZE, BEDOUIN, AND MUSLIM ISRAELIS SPEAK

The most powerful refutation comes from the people who supposedly live under apartheid. Their testimony spans Sunni Muslims, Christians, Druze, and Bedouin.

BEDOUIN MUSLIM VOICES

ISHMAEL KHALDI—ISRAEL'S FIRST BEDOUIN DIPLOMAT AT

Ishmael Khaldi grew up as a shepherd in a tent with no running water, as one of eleven children⁵⁰. He earned a master's degree from Tel Aviv University and served in the Israeli Police and the IDF. He later became Israel's first Bedouin diplomat, eventually serving as Ambassador to Eritrea⁵¹.

*"If it were true that Israel is an apartheid state, I wouldn't be here. The accusation comes from extremists who have the goal of attacking Israel. Israel isn't a perfect democracy, but nowhere else is either"*⁵²—ISHMAEL KHALDI, ISRAEL'S FIRST BEDOUIN DIPLOMAT.

*"Israel may be the only country in the Middle East, if not the world, where a Bedouin shepherd can become a high-tech engineer, a scientist, or a diplomat. The sky's the limit"*⁵³—ISHMAEL KHALDI.

*"I am a proud Israeli—along with many other non-Jewish Israelis such as Druze, Bahai, Bedouin, Christians and Muslims, who live in one of the most culturally diversified societies and the only true democracy in the Middle East"*⁵⁴—ISHMAEL KHALDI, WRITING DURING ISRAEL APARTHEID WEEK.

MOHAMMAD KABIYA—BEDOUIN MUSLIM, IDF AIR FORCE VETERAN

Mohammad Kabiya is a Bedouin Muslim from northern Israel. His family has supported Israel since 1948⁵⁵. He has lost three family members who served Israel as soldiers. He served in the Israeli Air Force Search & Rescue Unit, then became a pro-Israel activist confronting the apartheid accusation on campuses worldwide⁵⁶.

“Israel is my country, and she belongs to all her citizens—Muslim, Jew, Christian and Atheist. We must protect her just as she protects us”⁵⁷

—MOHAMMAD KABIYA, BEDOUIN MUSLIM AND IDF VETERAN.

“Our job was to save lives. We never concerned ourselves with the identity of the people who needed our help. We rescued Syrian civilians, Palestinian children from Gaza, and countless Israelis of every background. A life—whether Muslim or Jewish—is a life”⁵⁸—MOHAMMAD KABIYA.

SGT. FIRST CLASS AHMAD ABU LATIF—BEDOUIN MUSLIM SOLDIER

Ahmad Abu Latif was a Bedouin Muslim from Rahat⁵⁹. In January 2024, he was killed in action in Gaza. Before his death, he wrote a Facebook post to students at Ben-Gurion University⁶⁰:

“I am proud to be an Israeli Bedouin. The people I live with and work with are my brothers and sisters, and we all live together and respect one another in our land. I am proud to be a Bedouin who served in the IDF. I had the privilege to defend and protect in a meaningful service that I will never forget”⁶¹—SGT. FIRST CLASS AHMAD ABU LATIF, KILLED IN ACTION IN GAZA, JANUARY 2024.

“The Bedouin community mourns the civilian victims—Jews, Christians, or Muslims. We all share the same destiny, and we must be together and united”⁶²—AHMAD ABU LATIF, FINAL FACEBOOK POST, OCTOBER 2023.

**LT. COL. NADER EYADAT—BEDOUIN COMMANDER,
585TH DESERT RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION**

Lt.-Col. Eyadat is the first Bedouin to complete the IDF squad commander course. He commanded the battalion that re-captured Route 232 on October 7, 2023⁶³.

*“I have never felt racism in my life. I walk around with a uniform and a weapon with great respect and pride. I call on others to volunteer as well”*⁶⁴—Lt.-Col. Nader Eyadat, Bedouin Muslim, IDF Battalion Commander.

*“We fight for the land. We have been shoulder to shoulder in the IDF since 1948. Hamas did not differentiate between anyone: It killed Bedouins and Jews all the same”*⁶⁵—Lt.-Col. Nader Eyadat, Bedouin Muslim, IDF Battalion Commander.

BEDOUIN SOLDIERS—GENERATIONS OF SERVICE.
Bedouin families have served in Israel’s military since before statehood.

*“My great-great-grandfather was the first Bedouin Arab to enlist in the Palmach after meeting Yigal Allon in 1948. That’s where it all started. My grandfather served in the Shaldag commando unit, my uncle in Duvdevan, and I’m continuing the family’s path”*⁶⁶—Private G., 19, Bedouin, IDF Desert Reconnaissance Unit, 2025.

MUSLIM ARAB POLITICAL VOICES.

MANSOUR ABBAS—MUSLIM, HEAD OF ISLAMIC MOVEMENT PARTY, DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mansour Abbas leads the United Arab List (Ra’am), a conservative Islamic party in the Israeli government⁶⁷. In 2021, he became the first Arab party leader to join an Israeli governing coalition. He has also dismissed the claim that Israel is an apartheid state⁶⁸. In a primetime televised address, he stated:

*“I, Mansour Abbas, a man of the Islamic Movement, am a proud Arab and Muslim, a citizen of the state of Israel, who heads the leading, biggest political movement in Arab society, courageously champion a vision of peace, mutual security, partnership and tolerance between the peoples”*⁶⁹

—MANSOUR ABBAS, APRIL 2021 ADDRESS.

*“What we have in common is greater than what divides us... I reach out a hand to create an opportunity for coexistence in this holy land, blessed by three religions and home to two peoples”*⁷⁰—MANSOUR ABBAS.

After October 7, Abbas condemned Hamas’s attacks, *“The massacre is against everything we believe in, our religion, our Islam, our nationality, our humanity ... the state of Israel was born as a Jewish state, and it will remain one”*⁷¹.

CHRISTIAN ARAB VOICES.

YOSEPH HADDAD—ARAB ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN, IDF VETERAN

Yoseph Haddad was born in Haifa and raised in Nazareth⁷². He volunteered for the IDF’s Golani Brigade and was severely wounded in 2006⁷³. He founded *Together—Vouch for Each Other* and has ~2 million social media followers⁷⁴. He confronts the apartheid accusation on campuses worldwide.

*“Sometimes people say to me, “Yoseph, how could you fight for the IDF?” I say, it’s simple. It’s not the Jewish Defense Forces. It’s the Israeli Defense Forces. And I’m an Israeli”*⁷⁵—YOSEPH HADDAD.

“The worst lie is this Israel is an apartheid state. In an apartheid state, some can vote, and some can’t. But in Israel, Arabs don’t just vote—they sometimes call the shots. In 2021, as an article in Al-Monitor put it, “for

*the first time in Israel's 73-year history, Arab [Parliament] members will likely have final say on whether a government is formed and even who will head such a government. In an apartheid state, some get an education, and some don't. But in Israel, Arab enrollment in higher education is exploding—more than doubling between 2008 and 2018. And Israeli Arab Christians actually outpace Israeli Jews in higher education degrees relative to population*⁷⁶—YOSEPH HADDAD.

DRUZE VOICES.

HAMAD AMAR—DRUZE, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE KNESSET

*"In our whole region consisting of over 350 million Arabs, there are only 1,658,000 Arabs who have complete political and religious freedom and have the right to vote in full democratic elections. It is no coincidence that all of these Arabs live as full and equal citizens in the one Jewish State"*⁷⁷—HAMAD AMAR, DRUZE, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE KNESSET.

AZZAM AZZAM—DRUZE, RELEASED POLITICAL PRISONER

Azzam was freed from Egyptian prison through Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's intervention.

*"I am fortunate and proud to have been born in Israel"*⁷⁸—AZZAM AZZAM, ISRAELI DRUZE CITIZEN.

MANSOR ASHKAR—DRUZE COMMUNITY LEADER

"Even today, around the Middle East, [the majority of Druze] are either hiding their identity, or they are suffering from persecution. As a matter of fact, the only place in the Middle East where Druze are proudly wearing their religion and flag and have complete freedom of religion is in Israel.

*That's the only place we can openly say 'We are Druze, not Muslims'*⁷⁹

—MANSOR ASHKAR, DRUZE COMMUNITY LEADER.

X. CONCLUSION

The "Israel apartheid" accusation was conceived in Soviet propaganda, formalised at the antisemitic 2001 Durban Conference, and amplified by politically motivated NGOs.

The facts speak clearly: Israel's Arab citizens vote, run for office, join governing coalitions, serve as Supreme Court justices, they make up a quarter of the nation's physicians and nearly half its pharmacists, attend all universities, serve in the military and diplomatic corps, and enjoy the highest life expectancy in the Arab-Muslim world. The government has invested over NIS 40 billion to close remaining economic gaps. The Nation-State Law, as the Supreme Court has ruled, must be read in constitutional harmony with the Basic Laws protecting equality. Moreover, the West Bank situation, whatever one's view of it, is difficult: multiple bodies rule over disputed land, which the Oslo Accords govern; this is not a system of racial supremacy.

Israel is an imperfect democracy with work to do. Legitimate criticism of specific policies is appropriate. Nevertheless, the "apartheid" label is not criticism—it is a slander designed to deny the Jewish people the right to self-determination. It dishonours those who suffered under real apartheid and poisons the possibility of peace.

The last word belongs to those who know the truth firsthand:

*"Israel is my country, and she belongs to all her citizens—Muslim, Jew, Christian and Atheist. We must protect her just as she protects us"*⁸⁰

—MOHAMMAD KABIYA, BEDOUIN MUSLIM AND PROUD ISRAELI.

APPENDIX N

Splinter Groups Do Not Represent the Jewish People

This section features two articles on the effect “splinter groups” have on the mainstream Jewish population of Canada, and how much these groups actually represent the Jewish Canadians they claim to represent.

OPINION: THERE’S INDEPENDENT JEWISH VOICES, AND THEN THERE’S THE OTHER 99 PER CENT OF CANADIAN JEWS: PRESENTING SUCH FRINGE VOICES AS AUTHORITATIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF JEWISH OPINION DISTORTS PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING—ORI FREIMAN AND LAUREN FRENKEL

National Post¹

Ottawa, we have a problem: It’s called tokenism. Tokenism misleads Canadians by elevating a loud fringe as if it were the mainstream, turning a tiny group of individuals into the supposed voice of an entire community. It shields radical agendas by wrapping them in borrowed identities. Tokenism diverts attention from real threats by flooding misleading narratives.

Tokenism is exactly what’s at stake when in a recent National Post column, Corey Balsam and his associated anti-Zionist group—Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) were platformed, insisting that opposing Israel’s existence is not antisemitic.

The core claims of his piece have already drawn sharp rebuttals from writers, academics and commentators, such as Robert Brym,

Matthew Taub and Lynne Cohen. However, the deeper question of why IJV are even platformed was sidestepped.

We have heard this story before: Balsam pushes a narrative aimed at persuading Canadians that attacks on Zionism are legitimate critiques. However, we, and many others, argue that anti-Zionism today often operates as a modern hate movement, using “Zionist” as a proxy for “Jew” and denies Jews the right to self-determination, thereby reinforcing a campaign that targets Jewish history and collective identity itself.

While it is understandable that many feel compelled to challenge efforts attempting to normalize anti-Zionism, an even greater concern is having this discussion with IJV. It legitimizes a well-founded radical network, to which they lend their tokenized status.

Some of IJV’s closest allies include the Canadian BDS Coalition, whose campaigns they have, for a long time, proudly parroted and adopted. IJV has also made statements defending the fanatical organization Samidoun, now listed as a terrorist entity.

For those who don’t remember, Samidoun is the group that, while celebrating the one-year anniversary of Hamas’ October 7 attacks at a Vancouver rally, chanted “death to Canada, death to the United States and death to Israel,” following a speaker who told the crowd, “We are Hezbollah and we are Hamas.”

Moreover, IJV routinely collaborates on advocacy campaigns and social media posts with the influential Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM). Together, they fundraise, co-organize workshops, town halls, author reports, and mobilize for the same events, like the All Out for Gaza protest on October 14, 2023.

IVJ also collaborates on Instagram (which is a way of co-authoring posts with other accounts by invitation) with Yipeng Ge, an Ottawa doctor who has posted the following on X: “Palestinians as an indigenous population living under brutal military occupation and colonialism have every right to armed resistance against their oppressors. Solidarity with Palestinians and their right to life and dignity, must extend to solidarity

with their armed resistance.” Ge has also shared a social media post which appears to support Hamas’s orchestrator of the October 7 terrorist attack, Yahya Sinwar. IJV and Ge collaborate through press conferences, statements of support, and shared social media posts.

Often associated with IJV, David Mivasair, posted a report in early December 2023 suggesting sexual violence likely wasn’t committed on October 7, arguing that released female hostages spoke positively about their time in captivity. In March 2024, Pramila Patten, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, found after visiting Hamas’ attack sites that there was reasonable grounds to believe sexual violence had occurred during that attacks and was still occurring with hostages.

For federal elections, IJV has adopted the “Vote Palestine” platform which pressures politicians to adopt stances against many of Israel’s policies.

Independent researchers’ reporting and the Senator Leo Housakos have also noted that IJV shares a mailing address with the anti-Israel advocacy group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME). CJPME’s current president, Yara Shoufani, began her career with McMaster University’s Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), a students’ club dedicated to anti-Israel activities, that is currently officially suspended, and an “international leadership role” in PYM.

This is just a glimpse of the network IJV appears to have made itself a front for.

IVJ has already begun infiltrating the public conversation about Jew hatred under the guise of expertise. For example, they distorted the Senate of Canada’s Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights’ study of antisemitism, by serving as a Jewish front for a radical network, and importing their ideology into the committee which could lead some to believe they are representative of Jews.

Additionally, IJV was chosen by the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario, as well as the Canadian Union of Public

Employees (CUPE) Ontario, to provide “antisemitism training”. Ironically, IJV defended Fred Hahn after he posted what many would view as a clearly antisemitic video, depicting an Olympic diver marked with a Star of David turning into a bomb, followed by scenes of injured civilians. The result is turning genuine efforts to fight hate into platforms for spreading it.

IJV is not an authentic representation of the Jewish community perspective, not even a minority one. While the IJV cites a survey indicating that only 51 per cent of Jewish Canadian identify as Zionists, a 2025 survey found that only 1 per cent of Canadian Jews identify as anti-Zionists. As an “advocacy group,” they lend their Jewish identity as a moral authority to anti-Zionists.

Tokenization lies at the heart of this strategy. Throughout history, tokenized voices have been elevated to legitimize broader campaigns against the communities they come from. While minority views can be valuable for an inclusive discussion, tokenized voices are harmful to any discussion, particularly when those tokenized voices push a radical ideology.

Presenting such fringe voices as authoritative representatives of Jewish opinion distorts public understanding and misleads audiences about the breadth of Jewish perspectives.

When IJV is platformed as a moral authority against their own community, the result is not diversity of thought, but the manufacture of a false and damaging consensus that marginalizes mainstream Canadian Jews.

Combating hate means combating tokenism, and it requires action. If Canada is to uphold its commitment to pluralism and genuine inclusion, media outlets, public broadcasters and other institutions should carefully consider whom they elevate and how those voices are presented. Diversity should never be allowed to be manipulated into a weapon against any community.

IJV has had its say and platforming them further will only do harm. Legitimizing those who distort Jewish identity to attack Jewish

existence aren't Canadian values—they are someone else's values. Platforming IJV again is not inclusion but endorsement of exclusion.

**FRINGE JEWISH VOICES DO NOT SPEAK FOR OUR COMMUNITY:
ACCORDING TO A RECENT STUDY, REJECTION OF ZIONISM
REPRESENTS NO MORE THAN 3 PER CENT OF THE CANADIAN
JEWISH POPULATION.—MATTHEW TAUB**

National Post²

Corey Balsam, national co-ordinator of Independent Jewish Voices (IJV), recently published an article arguing that opposition to Zionism should not be equated with antisemitism and that those of us who support Zionism trivialize the threat of antisemitism. While Balsam's position may seem well-intentioned, it misrepresents Jewish identity and overlooks critical distinctions about Israel's security situation.

Zionism is central to Jewish identity and survival. Born out of centuries of persecution and culminating in the Holocaust, Zionism led to the establishment of Israel as a refuge for Jews, where we can live free from the existential threats we've faced throughout history. To reject Zionism, as Balsam advocates, is to deny the foundation of Jewish self-determination and security.

Balsam argues that opposition to Zionism is a moral response to Israel's policies, but he overlooks the key differences between Israel's actions in Gaza and those in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). Gaza, under the control of Hamas, is a site of constant aggression toward Israel, including thousands of rocket attacks on civilian areas. Hamas openly calls for the destruction of Israel and uses its own people as human shields. Israel's military response there is directly related to the security threat Hamas poses. In contrast, Israel's policies in the West Bank are part of a much more complex negotiation process with the Palestinian Authority, a group that has historically rejected peace offers. These nuances matter when discussing Israel's policies and the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Criticism of Israel is valid, but it must not deny Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state. I disagree with the Canadian government on various issues, but that doesn’t make me anti-Canadian. Similarly, while I can critique specific Israeli policies, that does not mean I reject Israel’s legitimacy. Antisemitism, as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, is hatred directed at Jews because they are Jews. When opposition to Zionism turns into calls for Israel’s destruction, it crosses into antisemitism. By framing criticism of Israel as simply moral outrage, Balsam fails to address the reality that this rhetoric often leads to violence against Jews, as we’ve seen in the rise of antisemitic incidents in Canada, which, according to Public Safety Canada, most recently accounted for 69 per cent of all religion-based hate crimes.

Balsam’s claim that rejection of Zionism reflects a growing movement within the Jewish community collapses under even minimal scrutiny. A 2024 study conducted by Robert Brym, a professor of sociology at the University of Toronto, found that 94 per cent of Canadian Jews believe Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish state, with about six per cent undecided, leaving approximately three per cent who actively reject Zionism. That is not a movement. It is a fringe group.

Yet despite this clear reality, many Canadian media outlets continue to quote spokespeople from groups like IJV on matters concerning the Jewish community as if they are representative voices. They are not. Elevating a tiny, unrepresentative minority as mainstream Jewish opinion is not balance, nuance, or responsible journalism. It is distortion, and it actively misleads the public about who Jews are, what we believe, and how we understand our own identity. Balsam’s position only serves to divide the Jewish community.

Rejecting Zionism is not a moral stand; it’s an abandonment of the principles that protect Jewish identity and safety. Israel’s existence as a Jewish state is not the problem; it’s part of the solution. By undermining this fact, Balsam and others inadvertently fuel antisemitism under the guise of political critique.

At Unapologetically Jewish, we firmly believe that Israel's right to exist is crucial to the survival of the Jewish people. This does not mean we condone all of Israel's policies, but it does mean we recognize the necessity of Israel's existence for the safety and self-determination of Jews worldwide. Rejecting Zionism jeopardizes the survival of the Jewish people and plays into the hands of those who seek to erase Jewish identity.

Zionism is not a fringe position; it is a core tenet of Jewish identity. To reject it is to reject the survival of the Jewish people. It's time for the Jewish community to speak with one voice, united in support of Israel and our unwavering commitment to fighting anti-semitism. Matthew Taub is the founder and executive director of Unapologetically Jewish, a national organization fighting antisemitism in Canada.

APPENDIX O

Israel Is the Most Improbable and Successful Anticolonial Project In History

Bryan Schwartz is a Professor of Law at the University of Manitoba, whose areas of teaching and scholarship include international law, human rights, the rights of Indigenous peoples, and oral history.

**CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IS GASLIGHTING US
WITH 'NAKBA' EXHIBIT: CONTRARY TO THE 'NAKBA' NARRATIVE,
ISRAEL IS THE MOST IMPROBABLE AND SUCCESSFUL ANTICOLONIAL
PROJECT IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.—BRYAN SCHWARTZ**

National Post¹

Maintaining a Jewish identity demands time, spirit and energy: connecting with millennia worth of history, studying the traditions, passing them to our children and contributing to the wider society while never abandoning who we are. Yet in the midst of all this, Jews are constantly forced on the defensive, fending off attacks from all sides. The latest example: the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' (CMHR) plan to open a new exhibit called "Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present".

Why is the CMHR uncritically adopting the term "Nakba," which translates to "catastrophe," when that supposed catastrophe includes the establishment of the State of Israel and the failure of invading Arab armies to destroy it? How is any such suggestion

consistent with the idea of “two states for two peoples,” with current Canadian policy or with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of antisemitism, which was adopted by the Government of Canada?

Canadian Jews invested huge sums of money and hope in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The idea was constructive: teach tolerance, promote understanding, build a better future for all. Many Jews wanted a Holocaust gallery. There an objective reason for a Canadian museum to focus on it, because the Holocaust was the crucial inspiration for our current international human-rights laws. Yet the museum largely ignores this truth.

Its presentation of the Holocaust is underwhelming, omits the grand mufti of Jerusalem’s support for Nazi Germany’s quest to annihilate the Jews and does not bother to mention that Jew-hatred, including from Arab quarters, blocked escape to the Jewish homeland. There is no positive word about Israel as the haven for Jews fleeing not only Europe, but vicious, often violent, persecution in the Islamic world. Around half of Israeli Jews today come from Africa and the Islamic world, not Europe. Now the CMHR is planning to create a “Nakba” exhibit, without any of the broad public consultations that shaped the Holocaust gallery.

I introduced the teaching of Indigenous oral history to my law school at the University of Manitoba. Preserving voices is valuable, but framing matters. Memory can be influenced by shared political views, such as the view that Israel is illegitimate; that all of “Palestine” inherently belongs to Arabs or Muslims; that Palestinian suffering is unrelated to the Arab invasion of Israel, ignoring that surrounding Arab countries took over the Palestinian territories, not Israel, and that almost all of them refused to give citizenship to the residents of the areas and instead exploited the plight of those displaced to maintain a living grievance against the very existence of Israel.

Context matters. Will the exhibit say anything about how the Jewish people are indigenous to the Land of Israel and have

maintained a continuous presence there for millennia, or anything positive about Israel at all? Basic truths deserve recognition. In 1948, Israel accepted the United Nations’ painful partition and, in its Declaration of Independence, welcomed Arabs to stay in peace and equality. Arab states invaded. Had they succeeded, Jewish civilization would likely have been propelled into ultimate extinction. Israel later offered numerous comprehensive peace deals, but the Palestinians refused. In 2005, Israel left Gaza entirely. Hamas turned it into a terror fortress, culminating in the October 7 massacre.

Two million Arab citizens remain in Israel—21 per cent of the population—with the highest life expectancy in the Arab world, constitutionally protected equal rights as individuals and language and education protections as a national minority. Meanwhile, almost a million Jews were ethnically cleansed from Arab lands. There are almost no Jews left anywhere in the Islamic world. And where, by the way, in the Middle East are Christians thriving apart from in Israel?

If the museum wants to tell a Canadian story, how about adding the story of the Jews who were displaced by the Holocaust, went to Israel only to find it under attack from neighbouring states and came to Canada to find peace—yet are now discovering that public schools, universities and national cultural institutions like the CBC and the CMHR are fraught with hostility toward Israel and Jews?

Instead, the museum continues to de-link the Shoah from the creation of the whole international human-rights system, refuses to portray Israel in a positive light and is barrelling ahead with an exhibit intended to delegitimize Israel and draw a false equivalence between the “Nakba” and the Holocaust. The CMHR has now joined with many other institutions in promoting a narrative that might as well be called “enough about the gassing, let’s proceed with the gaslighting”—this, from an institution that Jews helped to build in the hope that it would contribute to genuine education and tolerance.

If the CMHR wants to instead pursue balance and non-discrimination, it could at least prepare an exhibit on the indigeneity of the

Jewish people to the Land of Israel. It could tell an astounding, true story about a people who founded a small nation in a tiny land at the crossroads of three continents, and built a civilization that has contributed to the foundations of faith, culture, science and political morality, including the belief in universal human rights.

It could tell the story of a tiny people who survived imperialist and colonialist invasion after invasion—Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman, jihadist, Ottoman, European—and maintained a presence in their homeland throughout. Much of them were dispersed, but persecuted fragments from around the world returned, survived rejectionist wars of attempted annihilation and built a democracy that is at the forefront of science and technology.

Anyone who looks at the history of the Jewish people in good faith, with an open mind, and not through the lens of ancient hatreds conflated with contemporary “progressive” ones, might stop and recognize one of the most improbable and inspiring anticolonial projects in the history of the world.

Bryan Schwartz is a professor of law at the University of Manitoba and holds a rabbinical ordination from the Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute.

APPENDIX P

Anticipation and Refutation of the CMHR's Defences

It is expected that the CMHR and its supporters will offer several defences of the exhibit. Some of these can be anticipated, and each fails on its own terms.

DEFENCE 1: "THIS IS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND PERSONAL STORIES, NOT HISTORY OR POLITICS".

This is the central evasion. The exhibit is titled "Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present". The words "Past and Present" make clear that it will address not only the war of 1948 but ongoing events such as checkpoints, military operations, and the current situation in Gaza. It is also made clear that the exhibit will be showcased in a manner that vilifies Israel at every turn. The word "Nakba" (catastrophe) itself is a political term: it was coined to describe the catastrophe of the Arab armies' failure to destroy the newly declared State of Israel. It has since been repurposed to frame Palestinian displacement as an act of unprovoked aggression by Jewish people. A museum exhibit built around the term "Nakba" makes a historical and political claim, whether acknowledged or not. Personal narratives do not exist in a vacuum. They are selected, curated, and framed by people with documented political commitments. In this case, the curators relied on an Advisory Network whose documented members variously call Zionism a "*disease*," condone violent intifada, and deny Israel's right to exist. The decision about which stories to tell, what context to provide, and what to omit should

be historically scrupulous, as fair-minded as possible, and it should not be distorted by political, ideological, or religious partisanship. An exhibit that tells stories of displacement at checkpoints without mentioning the suicide bombings that necessitated them, or of suffering in Gaza without mentioning that Hamas, a genocidal terrorist organisation that diverted billions in humanitarian aid to build weapons and tunnels, is not apolitical. It is political by omission. The “*personal story*” framing is a shield against accountability; it permits the museum to advance a comprehensive partisan narrative while disclaiming responsibility for the historical claims embedded in every curatorial choice.

DEFENCE 2: “ORAL HISTORIES AND LIVED EXPERIENCE HAVE INHERENT VALUE AND DESERVE TO BE HEARD”.

No one disputes that Palestinian suffering is real or that personal experiences deserve respect. Nevertheless, a national human rights museum has an obligation to present those experiences within an accurate historical framework. Oral histories are shaped by collective memory, political socialisation, and decades of partisan narrative-building. Scholars of oral history, including those sympathetic to Palestinian claims, acknowledge that personal testimonies for events like the war of 1948 are inevitably filtered through subsequent political interpretation. The same is true of contemporary accounts: narratives about current Israeli military operations that omit the context of terrorist attacks, rocket barrages, and the October 7 massacre are not raw testimony; they are curated political argument dressed as personal experience. The CMHR applies rigorous historical standards to other exhibits. It should do so here. Personal stories that attribute all Palestinian suffering to Israeli malice, while omitting the Arab rejection of partition, the five-army invasion intended to destroy Israel, the century of anti-Jewish violence that preceded 1948, and the ongoing campaigns of terrorism that have necessitated Israeli security measures, are not unmediated truth. Voices included in a curated museum exhibit, which is distinct from an at-large public discussion, must be properly examined for truthfulness, bias, and animus. That is what curatorial responsibility means.

DEFENCE 3: "THIS IS ONE EXHIBIT AMONG MANY. THE MUSEUM ALSO HAS A HOLOCAUST GALLERY".

Any attempt to invoke the Holocaust gallery as justification for the "Nakba" exhibit lacks moral decency. The Nakba is not comparable to the Holocaust, which was the systematic, industrialised murder of six million Jews. The Palestinian refugee crisis resulted from a war that the Arab States initiated by rejecting the UN partition plan and invading the nascent Jewish state with the declared intention of destroying it. To place an exhibit premised on the delegitimisation of Israel alongside the Holocaust gallery is not balanced—it is a profound moral failure.

Moreover, the Holocaust gallery is itself a seriously inadequate portrayal. It omits the role that Jew-hatred from Arab and Muslim powers played in contributing to the Holocaust. One example of this omission would be the active Nazi collaboration of Hajj Amin al-Husseini (the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem), who met with Hitler in 1941. He recruited Bosnian Muslims for the Waffen-SS, helped broadcast Nazi propaganda throughout the Arab world, and lobbied the Nazis to prevent Jewish refugees from escaping to Mandatory Palestine. As documented in Klaus-Michael Mallmann's and Martin Cüppers' book *Nazi Palestine: The Plans for the Extermination of the Jews in Palestine*, Rommel's Afrika Korps being stopped at El Alamein prevented a continuation of the Holocaust in Mandatory Palestine¹. The Afrika Korps was supposed to meet with a specially trained SS Einsatzkommando unit. That unit was assembled in Greece in 1942 under Walter Rauff, the inventor of the mobile gassing vans, and would have followed the German Afrika Korps into Mandatory Palestine to exterminate the Jewish population there, with the active collaboration of Jerusalem's Grand Mufti². The Mufti actively collaborated in plans for the extermination of the Jews of Mandatory Palestine. According to some accounts, he envisioned extending the Holocaust throughout the Middle East³. The gallery fails to acknowledge that Arab rejectionism blocked the Jewish homeland from fulfilling its promised role as a haven for Jews fleeing persecution—both before and during the war—and that this obstruction continued

after 1945, when Arab leaders fought to prevent Holocaust survivors from reaching Mandatory Palestine. It does not address how the same forces that sought to obstruct the creation of a Jewish refuge have vilified the Jewish state ever since. The CMHR's answer to these deficiencies in its Holocaust gallery should be to correct them, not to compound them by adding an exhibit that advances the narrative of those who sought to prevent Jewish self-determination in the first place.

The methodological contrast is equally damning. The Holocaust gallery was developed through transparent consultation and substantial engagement with the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada. That organisation has now withdrawn from its partnership with the CMHR precisely because the Nakba exhibit fails to meet comparable standards. The Holocaust gallery presents established historical facts; the Nakba exhibit advances a contested political narrative as though it were a settled truth. The contrast between the two exhibits demonstrates institutional double standards—one of the “three Ds” of antisemitism.

**DEFENCE 4: “CRITICS ARE TRYING TO SUPPRESS
PALESTINIAN VOICES AND CENSOR THE MUSEUM”.**

No one is being silenced. The critics are not asking the museum to suppress any voice. The issue is with what the national cultural institution is platforming. We are asking the museum to end the partisan exclusion of Jewish and Israeli voices and Palestinian critics of Palestinian rejectionist movements. The museum should include the full historical context that the Advisory Network has every incentive to omit. It is the CMHR that has practised exclusion—by assembling an Advisory Network composed exclusively or almost exclusively of individuals hostile to Israel, by refusing meaningful consultation with the Jewish Heritage Centre, CIJA, or AGPI, and by framing any objection as an attack on free expression rather than a legitimate demand for balance.

Furthermore, voices included in a curated museum exhibit are not the same as voices in an open public forum. An exhibit is an institutional statement. The narratives it presents carry the museum's authority. They

must therefore be properly examined and curated for truthfulness, bias, and animus—just as any reputable museum would examine historical claims before presenting them to the public. A national museum funded by all Canadian taxpayers has an obligation to present contested histories with scholarly integrity. Asking a publicly funded institution to meet its own standards is not censorship; it is accountability.

DEFENCE 5: “THE IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM IS CONTROVERSIAL AND SHOULD NOT CONSTRAIN MUSEUM PROGRAMMING”.

The Government of Canada has adopted the IHRA definition. The IHRA definition does not prohibit criticism of Israel; it identifies specific forms of discourse—such as denying the Jewish people’s right to self-determination, applying double standards by requiring behaviour of Israel not expected of other nations, and drawing comparisons between Israeli policy and Nazi policy—as potentially antisemitic. The Advisory Network’s documented statements cross multiple IHRA red lines. The exhibit, as currently framed, will institutionalise several of these forms of discourse in a national museum.

In any event, regardless of the CMHR’s position on the IHRA definition—which remains unclear—the Canadian Human Rights Act’s prohibition on discrimination, the CMHR’s own enabling statute and its obligations as a Crown corporation, and its stated commitment to the ethical codes of the Canadian Museums Association and ICOM are all independently binding. The CMHR cannot evade its legal and ethical obligations by quarrelling with one definition of antisemitism while violating the broader principles of fairness, accuracy, and non-discrimination that govern every aspect of its operations. The exhibit, as currently conceived, fails those broader tests on its own terms.

DEFENCE 6: “CURATORIAL INDEPENDENCE REQUIRES THAT THE MUSEUM MAKE ITS OWN DECISIONS WITHOUT OUTSIDE PRESSURE”.

Curatorial independence is not a licence for curatorial capture. The museum’s ethical obligations under the Canadian Museums Association

Code of Ethics and the ICOM Code of Ethics require that exhibits be accurate, balanced, and developed through transparent processes. When a curatorial team is advised exclusively or almost exclusively by individuals who hold extreme and documented hostility toward the exhibit's subject, curatorial independence has not been exercised; it has been surrendered. The question is not simply whether the museum should be independent from outside pressure, but whether it has been independent from inside pressure. Has the CMHR maintained curatorial independence from an Advisory Network that was given privileged access to shape the exhibit's content and framing? Has the museum ensured that its selection and allocation of staff have not been influenced by an ideology incompatible with the Museum's mission? Has there been oversight into whether those working on this project have views that overlap with the intolerant elements of the advisory committee? There are larger governance questions, such as the extent to which the Board has diligently carried out its explicit statutory duty to ensure that the museum's mission is being fulfilled. The government of Canada generally cannot, under current statute, issue directives to the museums. However, directors serve at the government's pleasure, the government appoints the Board, and Parliament funds them. The government and Parliament of Canada both have the responsibility to speak out and address, with all the appropriate tools at their disposal, departures from proper governance and the use of public funds that are not consistent with existing mandates. Their responsibility extends to ensuring compliance with the Charter, human rights legislation, and the principles of public education, tolerance, and mutual respect, to which any government of Canada, of any party, should be fully committed.

ENDNOTES

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APPENDIX N

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APPENDIX O

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APPENDIX P

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