
2009 AUDIT OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS: *NATIONAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

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

Overview

Incidents occurred across the country in such diverse settings as synagogues, schools and school yards, children's day camps and playgrounds, campuses, street rallies, sporting events, hospitals and other workplaces, restaurants, homes, apartments and seniors' residential buildings. On the Internet, new social networking technologies were used to disseminate the most vicious calumnies against Jews and to issue threats of violence against them. Anti-Israel agitators, far-left-wing groups, and more recently Islamists, latched onto Nazi motifs and age-old anti-Jewish stereotypes, in an attempt to bolster their campaigns against the Jewish State, while the far-right-wing camp eagerly embraced anti-Israel propaganda to give an updated appearance to its traditional hate material.

The Overall Picture

1,264 antisemitic incidents were reported in 2009, the highest figure ever recorded in the history of the *Audit* and an increase of 11.4% from 2008. A ten-year view shows that incidents have increased almost fivefold over the last decade. When the League released its first *Audit* 28 years ago, the number of reported incidents was only 63.

The 1,264 incidents across Canada break down as follows: 884 harassment (69.9% of total cases), 348 vandalism (27.5%) and 32 cases of violence (2.5%). As in previous years, harassment continues to comprise the majority of cases. Incidents increased in all three categories. Violence showed the most dramatic increase, more than doubling in one year. Harassment went up by 10.1%, while vandalism was up by 9.4%.

The majority of incidents across Canada consistently occur in Ontario. In 2009, 672 incidents (53.2% of the total) took place in Ontario. Of these, 479 took place in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), 71 in Ottawa and another 122 in other areas of Ontario. While

Ontario incidents went down slightly (by 1.5%) and the GTA dropped by 11%, incidents in Ottawa rose by 14.5% and in other areas of Ontario by 48.8%.

There were 373 incidents in Quebec – representing 29.5% of all Canadian cases – a 52.5% increase over the 2008 data. Of these incidents, 319 incidents took place in Montreal, (a 58.7% increase) and 54 in other areas of the province (a 22.7% increase).

There were 80 incidents in British Columbia. While a similar number of cases was reported in 2008, the figure represents a significant increase over the 2007 figures.

There were 67 incidents in Alberta, constituting a 34% increase from the 50 cases recorded in 2008 and a marked increase from the 28 incidents reported in 2007.

Saskatchewan incidents showed a drop from 25 to 12 cases (down by 52%). There were 37 incidents in Manitoba, an 8.8% increase from the 34 cases in 2008.

The Atlantic Region, showed a 21.1% increase (up from 19 in 2008 to 23 in 2009).

No incidents were reported in the Northern Region in 2009.

Trends

There were 50 incidents targeting Jewish places of worship. Incidents included death threats against rabbis and synagogue staff, as well as vandalism of Jewish communal institutions. Such incidents were perpetrated across the country, including Montreal QC, Toronto ON, Barrie ON, Oshawa ON, Saskatoon SK, Edmonton AB, and Vancouver BC.

There were 111 incidents targeted Jews in their own homes, compared to 105 such incidents in 2008. Incidents included mezuzah desecrations, which targeted individuals who identified their homes as Jewish.

There were 137 incidents on university campuses - a dramatic increase from the 76 incidents reported in 2008. Incidents included ugly graffiti, face-to-face harassment in and out of the classroom and assaults during campus events.

Reflecting the range of new technologies used to disseminate hate, there were 434 reports of web-based hate activity with a Canadian connection, a 8% increase from the 405 cases reported in 2008, but a steady upward climb from the 310 cases in 2007 as more and more technologies are being co-opted for hate.

The month of January showed the highest number of incidents, an all-time monthly high (206 out of the 1,264 incidents for 2009). This can be linked to the war in Gaza since Middle East tensions often lead to an increase in antisemitic activity wherever Jews reside.