

## **B'nai Brith Canada Election Guide - Liberal Party of Canada Response**

### **Fighting hate & antisemitism at home**

The Liberal Party recognizes the real and growing issue of hate and antisemitism targeting Jewish Canadians and Jewish peoples around the world. The hate and virulence of antisemitism has no place in Canadian society. That is why the Liberal Government has taken action to oppose the Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) movement, increased funding for programs to address rising antisemitism across Canada, and worked to protect communities at-risk, like the Jewish community, from hate-motivated crime.

Prime Minister Trudeau has forcefully spoken out against the BDS movement both before and since becoming Prime Minister. At a January 2019 town hall at Brock University, he clearly stated that a Liberal Government “will continue to condemn the BDS movement...when you have movements like BDS that single out Israel, that seek to delegitimize and in some cases demonize, when you have students on campus dealing with things like Israel apartheid weeks that make [Jewish students] fearful of actually attending campus events because of their religion in Canada, we have to recognize that there are things that aren't acceptable, not because of foreign policy concerns, but because of Canadian values”.

In 2016, the Prime Minister and Liberal Caucus supported a resolution in the House of Commons condemning the BDS movement, noting the “long history of friendship as well as economic and diplomatic relations,” between Canada and Israel, rejecting “the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which promotes the demonization and delegitimization of the State of Israel.”

On November 7, 2018, in the Government of Canada's apology on the MS St. Louis, the Prime Minister made clear that “Canada and all Canadians must stand up against xenophobic and antisemitic attitudes that still exist in our communities, in our schools, and in our places of work.... The story of the St. Louis and the ill-treatment of Jews before, during and after the Second World War should fill us with shame..... [We hope that this apology] will cement Canada's unwavering commitment to stand with the Jewish community here and around the world in the fight against antisemitism.”

As part of the Liberal Government's Anti-Racism Strategy, antisemitic crimes are specifically singled out as unacceptably disproportionate. The Liberal Government has invested \$17 million to combat racism and religious discrimination, including antisemitism. This funding includes programs to improve data collection and targeted programs to counter hate.

To aid in this effort, earlier this year the Liberal Government adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as Government policy, to better inform the federal Government's approach to addressing this hate in Canada and around the world.

No Canadian should have to pray in fear or worry about their children's safety at school. Since 2015, the Liberal Government has quadrupled funding for the Security Infrastructure Program to enhance security in places like synagogues, schools and community centres, and improve protections for communities at-risk of hate motivated violence, like the Jewish community. This funding has helped Jewish community institutions across Canada upgrade their security infrastructure to prevent hate-motivated crime.

The Liberal Party celebrates Canada's multicultural heritage, and the role of generations of Canadians, including Jewish Canadians, in building a modern Canada. That is why the Liberal Government gave unanimous support for the bill co-sponsored by Liberal Member of Parliament Michael Levitt declaring May as Jewish Heritage Month, which passed through the House of Commons. The Liberal Party joins Jewish Canadians in celebrating their heritage and incredible contributions to all parts of Canadian society every May.

### **Standing up for Canadian values around the world**

Since 2015, the Liberal Government has maintained Canada's steadfast and values-based support for Israel at the UN and other international bodies. As the only true democracy in the Middle East, it is the Liberal Party's position to oppose efforts that unfairly and unjustly single-out Israel for condemnation through demonization, delegitimization, and holding Israel to a double-standard.

As Prime Minister Trudeau stated in August 2019: "Throughout the international community, it is Israel's right to exist that is most widely—and falsely—questioned. On this issue, we have always been clear: Canada's friendship with Israel is unshakeable."

As promised in the 2015 election, for the past four years Canada has an unbroken record of voting against the annual slate of unjust UN General Assembly resolutions that vilify Israel, and has never voted in favour of them.

While Canada is not a member of the UN Human Rights Council, and cannot vote on its agenda items, the Liberal Party opposes all efforts that unfairly single-out Israel, at this and other international fora.

As Prime Minister Trudeau said during Israeli President Reuven Rivlin's state visit to Canada in April 2019: "Canada and Israel are close friends and steadfast allies united by democratic values and deep people-to-people bonds. We are proud to stand with Israel...and we will always stand up and speak out against antisemitism, wherever it occurs".

A large number of Liberal MPs are enthusiastic members of the executive and general membership of the Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group, including as Chair of the Group. The Liberal Party believes that parliamentary diplomacy, such as inter-

parliamentary groups, is important for growing and strengthening Canada's international ties, including with Israel.

As concerns the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the Liberal Party supports the longstanding Canadian foreign policy position of a two-state solution, which is only possible through direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. Any peace must affirm Israel's right to defend itself and for Israelis to be able to live in safety and security. As Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said in 2018, "We know Israel is a democratic state in a dangerous neighbourhood. And...we fully support Israel's right to defend itself against aggression – whether it is from Iran or from terrorist groups such as Hamas."

The Liberal Party unreservedly condemns the Iranian regime for its egregious human rights violations against the Iranian people, actions to destabilize the Middle East, threats and denials of Israel's right to exist, for its imprisonment and role in the death of Canadians, and for its state sponsorship of terrorism, particularly through its proxy organisations Hamas and Hezbollah.

As Prime Minister Trudeau stated in 2018, “we deeply oppose Iran’s support for terrorist organizations, its threats toward Israel, its ballistic missile program, and its support for the murderous Assad regime [in Syria]. We will always defend human rights and hold Iran to account for its actions”.

That is why the Liberal Party supported a House of Commons motion in June 2018 that “strongly condemns the current regime in Iran for its ongoing sponsorship of terrorism around the world, including instigating violent attacks on the Gaza border,” and which also condemned “statements made by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei calling for genocide against the Jewish people.”

Since 2003, Canada has continuously been the lead sponsor of the annual UN resolution on the situation of human rights in Iran. We have and will continue this tradition of sponsoring and building international support for this annual resolution condemning the Iranian regime for its human rights violations.

Under a Liberal Government, Canada will always defend the rules-based international order and stand against the glorification of Nazism, fascism, Holocaust denial, and any form of antisemitism at home and abroad.

The Liberal Party also believes in strengthening economic and trade ties between Canada and Israel to help grow Canadian businesses and support jobs. On September 1, 2019, the modernized Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement came into force as a result of successful efforts by our Government to negotiate the most progressive trade agreement in Canadian history. Stronger bilateral trade relations represent a win-win for Canadians and Israelis to grow our economies and middle-class.