

## Criticism of Israel is not anti-Semitism

CJPME makes submission to CPCCA concerning anti-semitism in Canada

By [Global Research](#)

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Montreal – Earlier this month, the deadline arrived for Canadian organizations wishing to provide input to the respond to the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (CPCCA.) The CPCCA had asked for written submissions to “gain insight into the problem of antisemitism [sic] in Canada and develop meaningful suggestions on how to combat it both locally and globally.” In justifying its call for submissions, the CPCCA asserted that anti-Semitism had recently increased to “its worst level since the end of the Second World War,” and that anti-Semitism was “being manifested in a manner which has never been dealt with before.”

Some groups making submissions to the CPCCA questioned the very legitimacy of the Coalition’s claims about a resurgence of anti-Semitism. Independent Jewish Voices (Canada) (IJV) disputed the Coalition’s claim that anti-Semitism was on the rise in Canada, citing as proof a 2004 study commissioned by Canadian Jewish groups which showed anti-Semitism in steady decline. Similarly, IJV challenged the Coalition’s portrayal of supporters of Israel “intimidated to the point that they are not able to express themselves.”

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) focused its submission on the Coalition’s claim that criticism of Israel was a (“new”) form of anti-Semitism. “All forms of hate – whether anti-Semitism or other manifestations – are abhorrent,” stated Tom Woodley, President of CJPME. “Nevertheless, we cannot banish topics of dialog from discussion in Canada because a few misguided individuals may occasionally associate a head-covering with a particular point of view in a contentious public debate.”

CJPME argued that the CPCCA’s attempt to link criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism was untenable, and would violate fundamental protections enumerated in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. CJPME advanced three points to support its position: 1) that it would be impossible to define “politically correct” criticism of Israel in a way to respect civil liberties; 2) that Israel cannot be appropriately used as a proxy for Judaism/Jewry; and 3) that critics of the State of Israel are not the enemies of the Jewish people.

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*Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is a non-profit and secular organization bringing together men and women of all backgrounds who labour to see justice and peace take root again in the Middle East. Its mission is to empower decision-makers to view all sides with fairness and to promote the equitable and sustainable development of the region.*

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