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# Larry Maher: Canadian Jews are angry. It's a start

*We have been painted as 'white oppressors' with our own history of persecution erased*

By Larry Maher, Special to National Post

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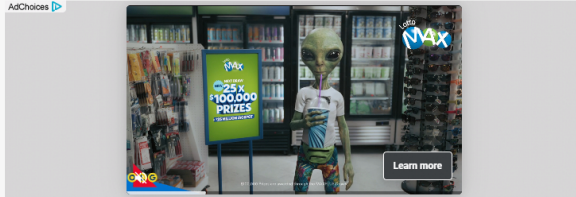
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in North York in 2024. The Modern Orthodox synagogue was the target of a shooting on Friday night. PHOTO BY GOOGLE STREET VIEW

In 1970, in an interview with a British television station, then Israeli-prime minister Golda Meir stated, "The quarrel with the Arabs is not a quarrel for a piece of land; it is not for territory, it's not for anything concrete. They just refuse to believe that we have the right to exist at all."

Fifty-six years later, world Jewry continues to face an interwoven battle that has been perpetually getting worse, exemplified by how we have witnessed this hatred grow exponentially in the last two-and-a-half years. What makes antisemitism particularly pernicious is the way in which, throughout history, it has adapted to the times, to today, where anti-Zionism not only seeks to push Jews out of civic life, but is also used to excuse the rising violence against Jews in Canada.



STORY CONTINUES BELOW



The story of Jewish suffering is woven deeply into history. Hanukkah celebrates a "victory" against those who sought to destroy the Jewish people. Purim tells of Haman's plot to annihilate the Jews of Persia. Passover commemorates the Exodus, when enslaved Jews fled Egypt for their lives. The Holocaust, in which six million Jews were murdered, follows the same tragic patterns of persecution, displacement, and survival. From pogroms in Ukraine and the Ottoman Empire to the Spanish Inquisition, history repeats itself.

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Since the modern state of Israel was declared in 1948, its Arab neighbours and state-funded terrorist organizations have sought the complete destruction of the Jewish State and its citizens. Terrorist organizations have sought to target the Jewish diaspora through attacks such as the 1994 bombing of the Jewish

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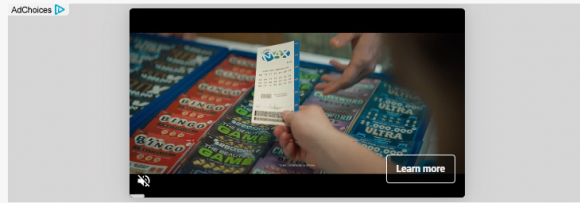
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Community Centre in Argentina, where 85 people were murdered, and hundreds were injured. All of this tells one very clear story: the attempted genocide of the Jewish people, whether they are in Israel or the diaspora.

Stretching back to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the State of Israel is the birthplace of Judaism and the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people. It does not control the cultural or religious lives of the Jewish diaspora, nor does it dictate political opinions or alliances. But Israel represents a home and nation for any Jew. Ignoring this bond fuels antisemitism and the worldwide hatred that Jews continue to face.

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We must speak out as proud Zionists, be loud about our right to feel safe in Canada, and stop politely, quietly asking for our safety.

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Immigrants from all over the world have carried their connections to their homelands and pride in their country, regardless of their opinions on the country's political leadership. Supporting Israel's right to exist as a sovereign nation for Jews should not be conditional on agreement with Israeli politics or the aggressive anti-Israel and anti-Zionist rhetoric from the leadership and citizens of other countries, including governments of the diaspora.

As a condition to patriotism we don't ask Chinese who have made Canada their home, but still retain their pride in their homeland, to denounce their government; we don't ask this of the Ukrainian community, the Lebanese community, frankly, we don't even ask it of the Palestinian community to denounce Hamas, which is a terrorist organization and also the elected leaders of Gaza.

As a method of self-preservation, the diaspora community has believed in the idea that donations and endowments to public institutions will put Jews in good standing with the greater communities and reduce antisemitic and anti-Zionist hate. While generous and well-intentioned, it does little to protect the Jewish community or "combat" anything in broader society.

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Jews across the diaspora have long contributed to the public good, showing leadership, goodwill, and civic responsibility, something we should be proud of, but the public recognition has had little effect on acceptance or legitimacy; instead, the Jewish community remains bewildered while an active campaign to push us out of public life, based simply on the fact that we are Zionists, is met by silence or verbal pandering from our peers.

In Canada, efforts to fight antisemitism have often been symbolic rather than substantive. The same phrases are repeated again and again when Jewish neighbourhoods are targeted, community centres are vandalized and Jewish schools and synagogues are hit by bullets including the most recent shooting at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in Toronto. All we hear is "hate has no place here" and "this isn't who we are," while our country's leadership fails to take any concrete action.

Canadian Jews have spent decades "going along to get along," using the same messaging about shared values, rather than loudly defending our community. The solution is not more museums, named buildings, or public appeals, forming committee after committee to combat antisemitism and appealing to governments to strengthen their responses to verbal and physical attacks.

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When Israel is under attack, it must be treated as a nation defending itself — and, by extension, the world Jewry who find themselves under threat regardless of political or religious affiliation. Until these conditions are met, teaching history and commemorating past tragedies, as important as they are, remain exercises in preaching to a sympathetic audience rather than ensuring real security.

The need to constantly define and negotiate with others about racism, religious hatred, and cultural intolerance demonstrates how lost society has become. The Jewish community believed that if we spoke in the language of progressives and their ideology of DEI, we would be accepted as a minority that deserves a spot at the table. Instead, we have been painted as “white oppressors” with our own history of persecution erased.

The Jewish community has endured and persevered for millennia — from Hanukkah to Passover, from pogroms to the Holocaust, from one war to the next.

But survival in the 21st century requires a new approach: stop condemning and asking for acceptance, start with concrete recognition and protection. What Jewish communities need now is leadership — visionary leadership capable of uniting, and enforcing the understanding that Jews are the People of Israel, while at the same time taking real action to ensure that all Jews are safeguarded. Until that happens, nothing will change.

*Larry Maher is CEO of Exigent Foundation.*



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National Post



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 **Will Warner**, I am Canadian but not of your faith. I too along with many other Canadians are angry that our leaders have failed us and our values. I continue to express my support for our Jewish community here, elsewhere and with my MP. Enough is enough.  
1 REPLY 20 1

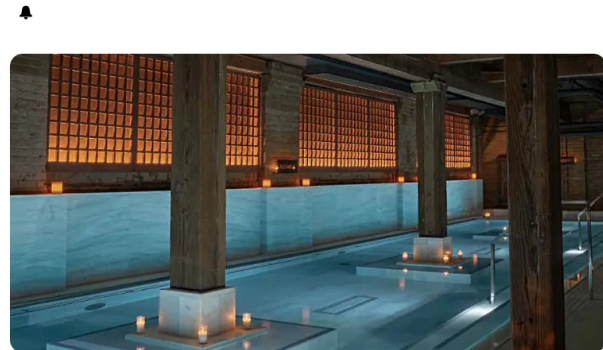
 **LUCA CHAN** · MARCH 11, 2026  
After 2-3 years since October 7th, I hope all of you realize this is more than just about Israel vs Palestine. One of the reasons why Canada and the rest of the west has so many religious divisions right now is because we've allowed in people that have no intent of fitting into our country. The liberals owe part of the blame for all these attacks that are happening in Canada because Trudeau said background screening for immigrants is racist 10 years ago. Now our government doesn't even know the actual immigration numbers. Trump really exposed how woke you Canadians are.  
2 REPLIES 25 3

 **Andy Brooks** · MARCH 11, 2026  
In the private sector if you notice that people you hire from XYZ university are bad employees you stop hiring them.  
Why can we not apply this simple logic to our immigration policies. If a high degree of people from a certain country or region tend to bring their h8 with them, just stop bringing them in. This would be a great step in backing our Jewish citizens.  
1 REPLY 40 3

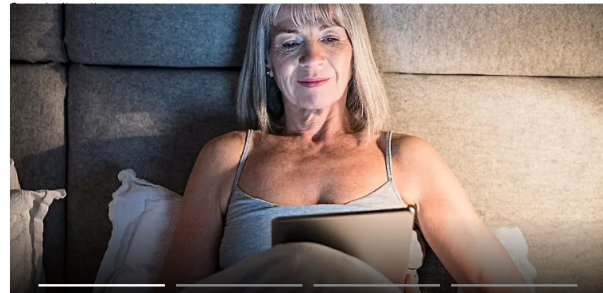
 **Anca Nitu** · MARCH 11, 2026  
I don't think they're angry enough, they still put Housefather in Parliament even though he did nothing to stop the wave of h8  
University Rosedale riding coming up for byelections has 7% Jewish population, let's see if they continue to put the authors of their troubles in Parliament again  
If you want this to end, stop voting LPC, send a message...  
continue to put the authors of their troubles in Parliament again  
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