



**NEWS RELEASE / COMMUNIQUÉ**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jews being used as scapegoats as economy deteriorates,  
findings of 2008 *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents* show**

OTTAWA, March 31, 2009 – The League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada released today its 2008 *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents*, an annual study on patterns of prejudice in this country. In total, 1,135 incidents were reported in 2008, representing an 8.9% increase over incidents in 2007 and a more than four-fold increase in incidents over the past decade.

“The findings of the *Audit*, which show antisemitism in this country at an all-time high, offer a paradoxical view of the state of anti-Jewish prejudice in Canada,” said Frank Dimant, B’nai Brith Canada’s Executive Vice President. “On one hand we have a Government that has made it a priority to root out hatred, and an official Liberal Opposition that also recognizes the widespread anti-Jewish prejudice against our community.

“It is difficult to reconcile the strong political will to fight antisemitism with the deteriorating situation on the ground where, more than ever before, Jews are being harassed and their community institutions vandalized. In some cases, Jews have even been physically assaulted.

“The picture that emerges in 2008 is one of the Jew again being used as a scapegoat, this time by disgruntled citizens impacted by an ailing economy. It is no accident that 547 incidents, close to half the total in Canada overall, took place in the last four months of 2008. We attribute this to the fall-out from the developing economic recession and such high-profile fiascos as the Bernard Madoff scandal.

“We note as well that December was the month with the highest total of the year. Of the 151 incidents that occurred during that period, typically a very quiet time due to the holiday season, 70 related to the emerging war in Gaza. Of these, 36 occurred in the last few days alone, as tensions heightened.

“The overall findings for 2008 demonstrate that antisemitism has weaved its way into all facets of Canadian society, tainting the work place and educational facilities, and targeting places of worship and private homes. Failing to act now, and hiding instead under the cloak of multiculturalism, will set Canada on a path along which so many other countries are currently being propelled, one that sees hatreds such as antisemitism turn ever more vicious and violent.”

The full text of the Audit can be accessed at <http://www.bnaibrith.ca>.

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B'nai Brith has been active in Canada since 1875 as the Jewish community's foremost human rights organization.

Incidents of antisemitism can be reported by calling B'nai Brith's Anti-Hate Hotline

at 1-800-892-BNAI (2624), or reporting online at [www.bnaibrith.ca](http://www.bnaibrith.ca).

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