

B'NAI BRITH CANADA 2019  
**Where the Major Political  
Parties Stand**




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## B'NAI BRITH CANADA

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**B'nai Brith Canada is the country's oldest independent Jewish advocacy organization**, maintaining regional offices across the nation. We are committed to combating the racism and antisemitism that threatens our society, advocating on behalf of the Jewish community on a wide variety of issues, and defending against efforts to delegitimize the Indigenous homeland of the Jewish People, the State of Israel. Our wide-ranging educational and social programs, community and volunteer services, and other initiatives offer support to seniors, students facing discrimination on campus and our community's most vulnerable. We are here to serve the entire Jewish community.

Our community services are multifaceted and far-reaching, ranging from advocacy to community sports leagues to affordable housing, and other essential services provided on a daily basis.

**Advocacy** – B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights operates the country's only *Anti-Hate Hotline*, both via telephone and through our online reporting system on our website, and advocates on behalf of victims of antisemitism. We work with students across Canada to push back against growing antisemitism on Canadian campuses, intervene in legal and legislative issues of concern to all Canadians, provide Holocaust Education programs and host survivors to speak at schools across Canada, and publish the [Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents](#), the authoritative and widely-cited document on antisemitism in Canada.

**Community** – We are a premier provider of affordable, sustainable, and [secure housing in Canada](#), catering to the needs of low-to-moderate income residents, Holocaust survivors and senior citizens. We provide free educational, fitness, recreational, social, Holiday, Shabbat, and other [programs for senior citizens](#), operate a [Holiday Food Basket Program](#) distributing food packages to our community's most vulnerable, as well as provide clothing items for the needy through our widespread [Clothing Donation Bins](#).

**Sports** – We run some of the largest amateur sports leagues in North America. The shared camaraderie and social events that are part of this dynamic sports network across Canada form an entry way to engage the next generation in our charitable activities.

The principle we operate by is that of “*people helping people*,” which is rooted in the Jewish principle of Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh B'zeh—all of Israel are responsible for each other.

**Wherever the community is, and whatever the community needs, B'nai Brith is there.**

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# WHERE THE MAJOR PARTIES STAND **IN 2019**

In preparation for this year's election, B'nai Brith Canada put a series of detailed questions to the four major political parties in the spring.

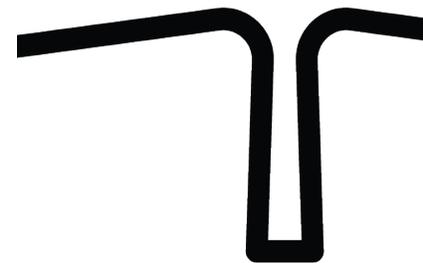
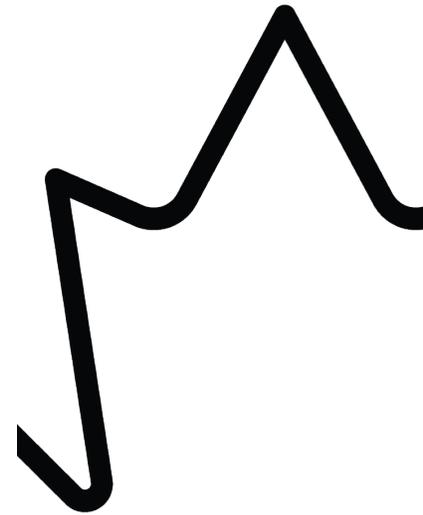
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We explained our positions – which you will see reflected in our Election Issues Guide. We asked the parties for their detailed views on all these issues affecting members of the Canadian Jewish community. We will be publishing all the responses received, in full.

In the interim, we are sharing information on where the parties stand, drawn from various sources, including statements on key Government of Canada websites. Our objective is to assist Jewish Canadians in focusing on the core issues as voting day approaches. In our judgement, these summaries accurately reflect key elements – although by no means comprehensive – of party positions based on public statements and information from the parties themselves.

B'nai Brith Canada also solicited the views on these topics by the **People's Party of Canada**, *which did not respond to our request for information.*

We ask readers to reflect carefully on the complete party responses, once published.





# Liberal

## THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

The Liberal Party says it recognizes the real and growing issue of hate and antisemitism targeting Jewish Canadians and Jewish peoples around the world; that the hate and virulence of antisemitism has no place in Canadian society.

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**The Liberal Party says...** that, 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.

In an August 21, 2019 speech to the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations, Prime Minister Trudeau stated: "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."

The Prime Minister spoke to the issues of **antisemitism and Canada-Israel relations** on April 2, 2019, during the visit of Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin: "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."

In 2016, the Prime Minister and Liberal Caucus MPs 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."

Prime Minister Trudeau has spoken out against the boycott, divestment & sanctions (BDS) movement on more than one occasion. At a January 15, 2019 town hall at Brock University, he said: "I 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 them [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 the Government's November 7, 2018, **apology over the tragedy of the MS St. Louis**, the Prime Minister said: "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 said to be 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.

The Liberal Government **adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism** as Canadian policy.

Since 2015, the Liberal Party notes that the 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, such as the Jewish community.

On the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the Liberal Party **supports the long-standing 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.

The Liberal Party says it **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 organizations Hamas and Hezbollah.

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."

After B'nai Brith Canada raised concerns over antisemitic and anti-Israel statements by a Liberal candidate for a Montreal riding, on August 30, 2019, the Liberal Party announced the individual had been removed and said in a statement that the comments attributed to him do not correspond to the party's values and that "... the Liberal team are **strongly opposed to antisemitic, hateful, racist, Islamophobic, homophobic, sexist remarks and any form of discrimination...** The Liberal Party condemns all forms of discrimination, and we always expect our candidates to do the same."

On September 1, 2019, **the modernized Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement** came into force. Minister of International Trade Diversification, Jim Carr, said: "Canada and Israel are steadfast friends and allies... As of today, the modernized CIFTA will help to reduce tariffs, ease border restrictions on goods, increase transparency around regulations, reduce red tape, and help small and medium-sized enterprises to generate more business in both countries." The Liberal Party believes that **stronger bilateral trade relations represent a win-win for Canadians and Israelis.**



**JUSTIN TRUDEAU**  
Leader of the  
Liberal Party



## THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

In a major foreign policy speech May 7, 2019, Conservative Party of Canada leader Andrew Scheer covered a number of points signalling how a Conservative government would approach relations with Israel and issues in the Middle East

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**The Conservative Party says...** that, as Prime Minister, Andrew Scheer would immediately act to **list Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist entity**, as well as make full use of the *Magnitsky Law* provisions to punish Iran's worst human rights offenders. He said he would **re-open the Office of Religious Freedom** in Global Affairs Canada to stand up for religious minorities all around the world.

He said he would **recognize the fact that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel** and, in response to a question, replied: "That obviously would include making sure that Canada's representation there is in Jerusalem and we'd work with the Government of Israel to accomplish [that]".

Mr. Scheer emphasized that, to stand up for pluralism and democracy, **Canada must renew its support for Israel and its inherent right to defend itself**. He noted that "terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah have absolutely no interest

in peace" and that "the reality of the Middle East is this: if Israel's enemies were to lay down their arms tomorrow, there would be peace. If Israel were to lay down its arms, there would be no more Israel."

"When Israel's borders came under attack from Hamas terrorists," said Mr. Scheer, "Canada must support Israel's right to defend itself and **recognize Hamas' direct responsibility in inciting violence** and the loss of life." Canada must be ready and reliable when Israel needs to count on its democratic friend and ally. As Prime Minister, he said he would extend a hand of friendship to the Palestinian people – those who want the same things that all people want – **freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law**. These things will not, said Mr. Scheer, come through incitement to violence, but **through the peaceful negotiations**.

Mr. Scheer does not believe that giving money to highly flawed organizations such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), advances the cause of peace or partnership. And **the Palestinian people are denied democracy, not by Israel, but by their own government**, he said.

Mr. Scheer and the Conservative Party have long expressed concerns with UNRWA – especially surrounding their ties to Hamas, the antisemitism harboured by employees, and recent allegations of ethical lapses and misconduct. A Party spokesperson, in comments to the media reported July 31, 2019, noted that the previous Conservative Government under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper was able to deliver aid to Palestinians while circumventing UNRWA, adding: "An Andrew Scheer Conservative Government **will immediately withdraw Canadian funding from UNRWA**."

In his Yom Ha'Atzmaut statement May 8, 2019, Mr. Scheer said: "We recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the central role it has held in Judaism and for the Jewish people for thousands of years.

We condemn recent indiscriminate rocket attacks by Hamas against peaceful Israeli civilians. **We will always stand for Israel's sovereign right to defend its borders and people.**

As recently as August 30, 2019, Mr. Scheer was **unequivocal in condemning antisemitism**: "Antisemitism is unfortunately all too real in Canada and threatens the safety and security of Jewish Canadians. As political leaders, we need to speak out and condemn it at every opportunity."



**ANDREW SCHEER**  
Leader of the  
Conservative Party

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## THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

In response to questions from B'nai Brith Canada, the New Democratic Party noted the rise in antisemitism in Canada and in other countries is deeply disturbing, that we should unite in condemning this hatred and take meaningful steps to ensure we put a stop to it.

**The NDP says...** it will always stand up against all forms of hate, including antisemitism, and it wholeheartedly accepts the need for a national plan to combat antisemitism.

The NDP believes **Canada has a responsibility internationally to tackle head on the scourge of antisemitism** around the world, and it should be raised in human rights dialogues with other countries as appropriate.

The NDP answers to three key questions were all 'yes' - that **Statistics Canada and law enforcement agencies should have a clear definition of antisemitic hate crime**, that Statistics Canada and law-enforcement agencies should record and report antisemitic and other forms of hate incidents, and that law enforcement agencies at the provincial and municipal levels should have dedicated hate crimes units, where population size warrants, or specific strategies - and the necessary resources and training - to deal with hate crimes.

The NDP agreed that, under federal lead, **Canada's provinces and territories should develop and implement a common, mandatory education curriculum to increase understanding of the**

### Holocaust, antisemitism and genocide.

On acceptance of the working definition of antisemitism used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), the NDP says it has some concerns that **the IHRA definition and its associated examples could undermine those who wish to speak out** in favour of the human rights of Palestinians.

When asked whether Canada should use a possible Security Council seat to speak out against antisemitism and anti-Israel bias in the United Nations system, the NDP responded to the first part of the question: **"Yes. Growing antisemitism is bigotry that must be confronted** and stopped in its tracks."

On removing a standing item from the UN Human Rights Commission agenda seen as unfairly targeting Israel, the NDP said: **"We believe Canada must join efforts in the UN system to speak out against violators of human rights** in all countries. All **UN member states must be transparent** and fully respect their international human rights obligations."

On removing a standing item from the World Health Assembly agenda seen as unfairly targeting Israel, the NDP said: **"There are many health challenges in the occupied Palestinian territories**, including in East Jerusalem and Gaza. Canada must step up efforts to address these challenges, some of which are related to the Israeli occupation."

On rejecting the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS) unfairly targeting Israel, we were told that **BDS is not NDP policy**. Conversely, **the NDP said no when asked if it would support the motions passed in Canada's House of Commons and Ontario's Legislature which condemn the BDS**, adding: "We believe these motions undermine the freedom of expression of Canadians, and the choice to support non-violent movements for the respect of international law."

On support for creation and implementation of legislation in all Canadian jurisdictions (including new federal legislation) aimed at preventing illegal boycott activities, such as those advocated by the global BDS campaign, the NDP said no, but that it **supports Israel's right to exist** and is unequivocally against the use of any antisemitic tropes or communications that are discriminatory against the Jewish community.

The NDP said no when asked about withholding government development assistance resources from organizations or academic institutions that advocate for or support BDS, adding that it believes this would undermine freedom of expression in Canada.

In response to a suggestion that Canada should not re-engage Iran diplomatically unless it commits to fully recognizing Israel's right to exist, to refrain from supporting destabilizing groups such as Hezbollah, the NDP said it believes that **Canada has an important diplomatic role to play in bringing Iran back into the mainstream international community**, that the party stands with the people of Iran in their aspirations for freedom, peace, democracy and the rule of a just law.

The NDP said it unequivocally **condemns the threatening statements and actions of Iran** against its neighbours, particularly Israel, and it condemns the human rights violations that continue to be perpetrated by its government.

The NDP **supports the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA, the 'Iran Nuclear Agreement')** to restrict Iran's nuclear program. The NDP would support using Canada's Magnitsky Act sanctions against Iran's human rights offenders.

The NDP **accepts the need for a close bilateral relationship with Israel**, as set out in the existing Canada-Israel Strategic Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, but said **it has concerns about the negative impacts of the modernized Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement** on the path towards peace between Israel and Palestine.

Asked if it would accept that no discriminatory distinction should be made between goods and services trade with Israel, including those involving firms operating in territories controlled by Israel since 1967, the NDP believes that **international law and UN resolutions must be upheld by distinguishing between products made in Israel, and products made on occupied territories.**

The NDP **does not support Canada's recognition of an undivided Jerusalem as Israel's capital** and a move of the Canadian Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, saying it believes this would be detrimental to international law and peace, as

East Jerusalem is occupied Palestinian territory.

The NDP **does not endorse Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights**, saying that the Golan Heights are occupied Syrian territory.

The NDP says it will work towards a **just and lasting two-state solution between Israel and Palestine** that respects human rights and international law.



**JAGMEET SINGH**  
Leader of the NDP



## THE GREEN PARTY OF CANADA

On September 4, 2019, Ms. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party, stated: “One of the core values of Greens around the world is respect for diversity and human rights. There is absolutely no room for any form of discrimination in the Green Party.”

**The Green Party says...** “We have zero tolerance for sexism, Islamophobia, antisemitism, misogyny, homophobia or hate speech of any kind. Canada’s strength lies in its diversity.”

In response to questions from B’nai Brith Canada, the Green Party noted that the steady increase in hate crimes and incidents, both at home and abroad, is deeply alarming. Fueled by a resurgence in recent years of destructive and divisive politics, the disturbing effects are perhaps most apparent south of our border. However, it is clear that we are only a few steps away from following that same path.

The Green Party is **committed to working with affected communities, and the many strong civil society organizations that serve them, on a national plan to combat antisemitism** at home and abroad.

**A fresh federal strategy to deal with the dissemination of hate speech and hate crimes** on the internet and social media is needed. The Green Party believes it is time that social media giants, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are held to account and that **Canadian standards for illegal content removal are set**, as has already been done in the European Union.

The Green Party believes public education is an essential part of the solution to ensure that the sobering history of human rights violations that have been perpetrated against minority groups, and the lessons they provide, will not be forgotten. The Green Party **will call for mandatory curricular inclusion of materials to this effect, with particular importance paid to the atrocities committed against the Jewish people during World War II** – a necessity given the frightening rise of modern Holocaust denial.

Increased hate has not been confined to the digital world. Verbal and physical threats to members of minority communities, particularly those who gather at religious institutions, including schools and other cultural centres, are also on the rise. Synagogues finding that they must spend large portions of their budgets on physical security is unacceptable. The Green Party believes that **a national plan to combat antisemitism, hate crimes and hate speech must also include the following:**

- Development of training resources and guidelines for law enforcement agencies to help them understand the unique security concerns faced by religious communities;
- A commitment to working with those communities to develop appropriate security and response plans, to both prevent offences and ensure victims receive the support they need;
- Improvements to offence definitions and the statistical tracking of offences, both criminal and non-criminal; and,
- Increased funding, delivered through Public Safety Canada, to ease the increased financial costs being borne by religious institutions.

Canada also has an important role to play in combating antisemitism, hate crimes and hate speech and protecting religious minority communities abroad. The Green Party is **committed to speaking out vigorously and utilizing Canada’s diplomatic influence to condemn hate offences and other human rights violations in the strongest of terms** on the international stage. Canada must be a lead advocate for the rights of refugees and persecuted

The Green Party believes that legislative tools, such as the *Immigration Act and Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act* (“Magnitsky Act”), should be leveraged to hold foreign actors accountable.

**Notorious offenders, such as the Iranian Government and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, must face sanctions.** However, **diplomatic ties should also be maintained, as further isolation of bad actors serves only to increase polarization and harm innocent individuals** within their borders.

The Green Party maintains that the international community also holds a responsibility to pressure actors to work towards peaceful solutions in cases of conflict, and supports individual citizens’ rights to engage in non-violent protest. While the Green Party **does not endorse the formal Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, it acknowledges the tactics it entails as legitimate tools of non-violent political expression.**

The Green Party is **committed to helping restore faith between United Nations’ agencies and Israel,** believing that **they still have a key role to play in facilitating progress toward a two-state solution** for Israelis and Palestinians that recognizes the deep connection both communities feel towards the land and holy sites.

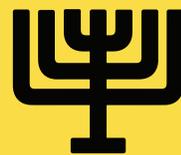


**ELIZABETH MAY**  
Leader of the  
Green Party



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League for  
Human Rights of  
B'nai Brith Canada  
Ligue des droits  
de la personne