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CANADA

Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism

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Parliamentary Publications

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•(1105)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.)): Good morning, everybody. *Bienvenue à tous.*

I am pleased to call to order the first meeting of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism.

I just want to remind the witnesses that you will have 10 minutes for your opening remarks, and this will be followed by questions and answers. I also want to remind you that the transcripts and the report will be available on our website, cpcca.ca, starting February 2010.

As this is not an official parliamentary committee, the proceedings are not subject to parliamentary privilege. Therefore, statements made during these hearings can be subject to Canadian civil and criminal law.

I also want to let members know that we've divided today's hearings into two parts. The first part will be with the Right Honourable Denis MacShane and Gert Weisskirchen. I also want to let members know that Dr. Fiamma Nirenstein is unfortunately not able to be with us as she just had some eye surgery and cannot attend. We'll get her in two weeks.

That means that for the first part, which will end at about 12:20, we'll have a few more minutes, if members want to ask questions. It also means that we'll be more generous with the time for both Denis and Gert.

With that, I would like to call the Right Honourable Denis MacShane to begin his remarks.

[Translation]

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane (Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism Inquiry Panel, UK): Mr. Chair, I'm not exactly sure which language one should speak in this forum, but in England, we endeavour to speak from time to time in a civilized tongue. Therefore, I can continue in French, if that helps you at all.

[English]

Perhaps as I'm a Brit, I'll speak in English.

Thank you very much for inviting me to be here.

Who am I? I've been a member of the British Parliament since 1994. I was number two in the foreign office as Minister of State until 2005. When I stood down, my friend and colleague, John Mann, who is chairman of the all-party parliamentary group on anti-Semitism, asked me if, on behalf of the House of Commons, I might be interested in forming and chairing a commission of inquiry into

anti-Semitism. It's a subject I've long been involved in. The first political pamphlet I ever wrote was an attack on racism in the media. That was more than 30 years ago, but since then I've been tracking racism, and of course anti-Semitism is a component part of traditional and new racism.

Both inside Britain and in my work as minister for Europe around the continent of Europe, I've certainly picked up quite a lot of anecdotal evidence on the resurgence of anti-Semitism organized politically from the hard right and sometimes from the hard left, sponsored by states. In particular, there was evidence that Jews in Britain were experiencing levels of discomfort in their full citizenship, which I considered unacceptable, but before making that assertion, I thought a committee of inquiry might help. So I asked other senior parliamentarians to join me—Iain Duncan Smith, the former leader of the Conservative Party; Mr. Chris Huhne, who was a very senior member of the Liberal Democratic Party; Khalid Mahmood, one of our Muslim members of Parliament; Lady Sylvia Hermon from the Ulster Unionist Party; as well as ex-ministers and privy councillors from the Conservative and Labour Parties.

It so happened—it's just a matter worthy of note, and I didn't really work it out this way—that none of us is Jewish, and I'd say very few of us, myself included, have taken any active political interest in the Israeli-Palestinian debates that obviously are as lively in British politics as I'm sure they are in Canadian politics. I went to Israel once in the early 1980s, and other than having a layman's knowledge of the problems there, and obviously supporting both the right of Israel to exist and the right of the Palestinian people to have their grievances met and dealt with, I have not been involved in their politics.

So we set up the committee of inquiry. It met in a very traditional way, almost harking back to 19th century committees of inquiry; that is to say, we have evidence sessions like this in the House of Commons. We invited people to send in their representations, and we received literally hundreds of different papers and witness statements that were sent in from both sides of the argument. We asked leaders of the Jewish community, the chief rabbi, the board of deputies of British Jews, which is the governing council of the Jewish community in Britain, and academic experts. But we also wanted to take this into the realm of government and public administration, so we asked the police to come and give evidence. We asked government ministers to come and give evidence. We didn't want to narrow it down to looking at just what were considered to be anti-Semitic attacks—the daub on a synagogue wall, the desecration of a cemetery, the punch in the face of a rabbi, the jostling of a student—but to actually look at whether government departments and public administration in the United Kingdom were (a) recognizing it as a problem, (b) coming up with strategies to tackle it, and (c) educating and informing executives down to the level of vice-chancellors and police chiefs that this was a problem that had to be taken seriously.

Our committee met. I think we had fewer evidence sessions, sir, than you were planning. We also travelled outside of London to take evidence from students and school children in Manchester. We went to Paris as well to get a flavour of the European side of things. Actually, that didn't feature in the report.

Finally, after about a year's worth of work, we produced this report, which I'm sure will be in your witness packs. If you look at it and read it, you'll see that it's presented as a House of Commons white paper. It's actually printed by the stationery office, and it has a very traditional paragraph-by-paragraph set of points, arguments, and then conclusions.

I presented that, with some of the commission members, to Prime Minister Blair in September 2006. I do stress that this is a completely all-party thing. There is no difference between Labour, Conservatives, and Liberal Democrats on this issue. Mr. Blair promised to send it out to government departments for their reaction, and the government then collectively produced its response to this report in the spring, or perhaps a little later on, of 2007. Since then the government has produced an annual report on the problem of anti-Semitism every year. So that actually translates what was a parliamentary procedure into actual government practice.

For example, we were asking the foreign office to challenge the anti-Semitic behaviour and statements in some states where clearly the government itself could be seen to be sanctioning or approving anti-Semitism. Some of these states rightly make appeals to us if they feel that Muslim sensibilities have been offended, and states have a right to ask of other states that they take action in certain areas. One may not choose to follow those requests, but I think globally, from the democratically elected parliamentary states, we can also legitimately say to some other states—although I'm not going to name them here, as that's for the committee's work to do later on—that they have to accept responsibility for what is done in their state's name.

So that's pretty well it. It was punctuated by the Lebanon conflict in the summer of 2006, and then of course the Gaza conflict earlier

this year, with very big spikes in anti-Semitic attacks and a decline of editorial standards, so you had the equation of Jews with Nazis, and Israel as an apartheid state.

Having done a lot of work in the 1980s with the black trade union movement in South Africa, laying in ditches outside townships as the apartheid state rumbled around and tried to catch me, I think I know the difference between an apartheid state and undoubtedly the policy lines of Israel—which we have always insisted are perfectly open to criticism. To criticize Israel is not anti-Semitic, but equally, it is wrong to say that anti-Semitism is just an invention of people who want to defend Israel. It is real. It exists. It exists on campuses, and it exists in some politician's minds.

As I've written in the *National Post* today, and I'd almost like to read that article into the record, we're seeing now at the European Parliament overtly anti-Semitic politicians elected. We're seeing a banalization of anti-Semitism in European political discourse, which is very worrying.

To conclude, following on from that commission of inquiry's work, I welcome strongly that it was enlarged into an international coalition. The first conference is now being held in Germany and then in London, and I think it is coming to Canada next year.

If parliaments themselves take this issue seriously, you can move away from the overexcited rhetoric of a speech or a person with a cause to plead, and you have to sift the evidence. This is an extraordinarily sober report. There are no dramatic adjectives here. This is not a report, in my judgment, that seeks to sensationalize or to find justification for any particular part of the arguments that swirl around the issue of new anti-Semitism, but in very much a Whitehall civil service way—if I can use that metaphor—it seeks to downplay. However, because it downplays, because government departments have to come back and defend what their police services are doing, what the foreign office is doing, what the higher education departments are doing, they think, like any government, they're doing the right thing, and now they are under a bit more pressure to have to think through whether this is a problem or not and the extent of how they should handle it.

So I think making it sober and turning it into an all-party parliamentary committee's work is a very concrete way of helping. It's a way I can help as a parliamentarian. That's what I do. That's my profession. That's my business. I can write a book. I can make a speech. I can do articles. That's fine. But as parliamentarians, we do this work.

• (1110)

I really welcome the Canadian initiative. I wish this session every success in the future work of the committee.

Thank you.

• (1115)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Thank you for being here as well, Denis.

Professor Gert Weisskirchen.

Professor Gert Weisskirchen (Former OSCE Personal Representative to the Chairman-in-Office for Combating Antisemitism, As an Individual): First I would like to thank you for inviting me, *chères collègues*, to come here and give a short report about what I've been doing and what I did.

I would like to first recommend what Denis mentioned at the end. My proposal would be that you should follow along the line or the kind of proposal that the Parliament in London has been doing, and deliver it. In my understanding, my observation, and analysis, that kind of inquiry is the best that parliamentarians can do in order, first, to look at the things going on, on the ground, and second, to draw conclusions out of this on at least three levels. First is on the local level, how to improve the exchange of what can be done on the ground with people and local authorities. Second is to ask the government to improve their instruments. Third, and this is crucial, in my opinion, could best be linked to the first level, to encourage civil society and non-governmental organizations.

If you look into the problem, you will find out... That's my observation, and I've done it since 2002, to observe what is going on in the different 54 member states of the OSCE. Canada is a member of it, as you know. My observation is that there is no doubt that the political elite, especially the governments, are clear-cut in fighting against anti-Semitism. Sometimes there is some uncertainty found in different governments—not in Canada, Great Britain, Germany, or France. The point is, and this is worrying, if you go down to the society, on the local level, you find problems. There is at least a discourse on a very formal level. Again, it is clear-cut. But there are narratives coming from different angles of the given societies. Take a look at, say, Hungary. The last political developments there show that anti-Semitism is on the rise in a very brutal way.

So this is the picture I've discovered. It's clear-cut on the level of formal politics, but if you go down into the circles of societies, you can observe problems arising.

I recommend again what Denis touched on. Parliaments should take the lead in this regard. I served 33 years in the German Parliament, and last Monday, one week ago, I left Parliament in Germany. We know that as parliamentarians we are a kind of seismograph of what is going on in the constituencies, how people are thinking, and we observe what is going on. If you were to ask Jewish communities on the ground, you would find out that they are now finding out that they are in trouble, and sometimes they are in danger. They feel they are in danger. That means the climate is gradually changing.

Personally, I think that we as parliamentarians have the responsibility to figure out what is going on in the local area. That's my observation. If you then ask what is really going on, you will find at least two different patterns. The first is the old anti-Judaism, which is historically clear-cut. Then there are the new forms of anti-Semitism, the last of which relates to criticism of Israel. There is a whole variety of things you can find in the public discourse. In my case, in Germany, in addition to this is a third discourse going on. It is a narrative that is changing, because as the witnesses not only to the Holocaust but also to the Second World War are disappearing one by one, there arises the psychological problem of what kind of

history they are telling their great-grandchildren. As you know, as we all know, sometimes when we are looking back into our memory of what has happened, we are trying to save our identity. In some regard, these great-grandparents are telling their great-grandchildren a different story, not what really happened. They are giving them a picture of what they would like to be understood.

• (1120)

Now, you can imagine that when this kind of personal narrative is changed, we are going to be in trouble. So not only historians but we as parliamentarians are responsible and share the obligation for the kind of new cultural memory that is now being shown to the public.

It's our responsibility to try to figure out what new world the younger generation is going into. In this regard, education is key. Who is responsible for education? At first, we as parliamentarians are responsible for laying out principles not only regarding content, but especially regarding forms of education and how teachers should be introduced and taught, and how they should be teaching in light of this problem, this crucial paradigm shift we are in, constructing a new picture of what has happened in the past. This is cultural memory, not personal remembrance. Right now, we are faced with constructing this picture. So I hope some of the findings of your inquiry will help you be productive as parliamentarians.

This is my last point. Next week, OSCE's 2008 report on hate crime will be published. ODIHR, an institution within OSCE, produced this report, which included one paragraph on anti-Semitic events. It's a comprehensive study, a comprehensive report, and there is one part dealing with anti-Semitism. You have the possibility of getting that report. If necessary, you can ask me; I am going to send it to members of the House here.

• (1125)

There is, first, limited official information available on anti-Semitic hate crimes in the OSCE region. Why? The problem is that you have a clear-cut data base, but the member states are not ready to deliver that clear-cut data base, so that is one problem we are facing in the OSCE area.

Second, while 19 participating states reported that they collect such data—Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States—that number means that two-thirds of the member states are not delivering. They are not actively participating in what they have decided on.

Third, only eight submitted figures for 2008 to ODIHR, and Canada is lacking in this regard.

I have two points in addition. Austria and the Czech Republic reported an increase in incidents compared to 2007. Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom reported a decrease. The other three countries did not report comparable figures from 2007.

Last, there are non-governmental sources for data on anti-Semitic crimes in 2008 in many OSCE participating states, and this is the only reliable source the OSCE really can depend on. But as you know, NGOs are sometimes alarmist, and in some way you can be sure this alarmist signal is not serious enough to take into account. What I was talking about and what I would like to ask you to do as parliamentarians is to use the lever of the OSCE in your national parliament in order to strengthen the idea that all the participating states should follow their obligations and the decisions they made.

Thank you so much.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Now we'll begin the round of questions. We will start with Ms. Murray.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Thank you for coming so far to help us in understanding this issue and with our inquiry.

I have a question for each of the honoured guests.

Mr. MacShane, I have actually two things. First, did you have an agreement from your government before the inquiry to take certain actions, to file a report in Parliament, to deliver on recommendations, or did that emerge after you produced your report?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: I think as parliamentarians in a globalized world—I prefer the term “interpolar” rather than bipolar or multipolar—we have to start giving evidence and being available more to each other. Frankly, to come to Ottawa it's a six-hour flight. It takes no longer than it does to go by train to bits of Europe or even to drive to bits of England. We should relax. A friend told me that only about one-third of the representatives of the U.S. Congress had passports. I don't know whether that's true or not. I think we have to be much more relaxed. We should always try to build into our national parliamentary work evidence from other countries just to educate ourselves. Canada, particularly, being bilingual, is a great example of that.

The answer is no. I assumed, knowing Tony Blair personally and having stood down as a fairly senior minister, that we weren't going to face any difficulties. The different government departments freely came and gave evidence. There could have been a change of government. There could have been a change of leader. In fact, when we did present our evidence to Tony, it was on a Tuesday morning in September when there was an immense convulsion in the Labour Party and he was kind of on the point of being punched out of office by his loyal backbenchers. That often happens in politics. Iain Duncan Smith, the Conservative Party leader, was there. He came in with me. Tony looked at him and said, “Ah, Iain, you know what's it like to have to stand down as a party leader. Could we talk afterwards?” Sorry, that's not necessarily for the record.

I think precisely because the report, as I say, was very moderate, very calm, quite precise, it was not a big “ask”. It was a polite request for government departments to respond. We have a political class in Britain, I think, that does want to combat anti-Semitism, and supporting this committee's work was also the government's way of doing so.

• (1130)

Ms. Joyce Murray: Thank you.

I'd also love to hear from you what you would do differently if you were to do this again. I'm sure you learned during the course of it, and we can value those lessons. If I get more time, I'll come back to you with that question.

I have a quick question for Professor Weisskirchen.

Professor, you commented on the cultural story and narrative. I completely understand that concern. What I'm interested in hearing from you is why you see that as so integral to the work of combatting anti-Semitism, which as a subset of racism stands on its own.

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: The point here is that we as Germans have a different experience with that. That form of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism led to the Holocaust. You can imagine that although some of these great-grandparents were involved as soldiers, for instance, in crimes, now they are trying to leave this earth leaving behind a picture in which they were not guilty. You can imagine. The Holocaust is then the key. The problem is that if you universalize the Holocaust and do not bind it to a context, to what really happened on the ground, then the morality of the argument to fight against anti-Semitism loses its strength. This is the point I'd like to make. And I'd like to show you how the different narratives are intertwined. We have to be very cautious and strong in the end to figure out what is going on in a family discourse because the great-grandparent would like to appear to be an honest person within the family's history. However, this could lead to the point where all the other experiences of the last century, and especially the Holocaust, are diminished. This is what I'd like to refer to.

• (1135)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Hoepfner.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to both of you for being here.

My first question I would like to direct to Dr. MacShane. This is actually the first convening of this panel.

I'd like to hear from you a little more information on the panel itself. Congratulations, first of all, on being able to present a non-partisan and moderate report. I wonder if you can help us as we prepare to get started on this, and perhaps tell us some of the pitfalls and some things that we need to be looking at and that we may be able to avoid, things that you encountered, so that we can truly have a non-partisan and moderate report presented.

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: Gosh, the panel was quite eclectic, in the sense that there is always that period after an election when, although the Labour Party was confirmed in office, there are new ministers and people swirling around thinking about what they would do for the next parliamentary session. It was a good moment to grab them and tell them that it wouldn't take up much of their time.

Congratulations on having so many colleagues here today. When we got into our second and third sessions, Chairman, I have to say, it thinned out a little bit, but that's normal. However, everybody signed off on everything and everybody was informed about everything.

What we actually found was that there were four or five men and women who just really took it very seriously, including Iain Duncan Smith, the former Conservative Party leader. He tended to focus particularly on the police, social policy, family breakdown, and community breakdown. He wanted to have a real look at why the police weren't reporting this. Why were they reporting it strongly in London and to a lesser extent in Manchester, but not in Glasgow and Leeds, where there are big Jewish communities and anti-Semitic incidents? In some areas the police just didn't record it at all.

People found the things they wanted to specialize in. I think we had a first-rate secretariat group. There was a young man named Elliot Conway, who could go straight to become permanent secretary of a ministry, but he really cut his teeth on that and produced it very well.

We were an outlet for various organizations. I'm thinking of the Community Security Trust in Britain, which is a voluntary or non-profit organization that supplies security on a volunteer basis for Jewish weddings, Jewish events, synagogues, and so forth, and raises a lot of money, about £4 million to £5 million a year. They produce scrupulous reports. They really only highlight in their reports anti-Semitic incidents for which there is incontrovertible proof, three or four sources, not the e-mails we all get from guys saying, "People are gunning for me." The committee was an outlet for some of that.

We also invited the Muslim Council of Britain, and we invited people who took a different position, saying that accusations of anti-Semitism were just part of propaganda efforts to prevent any legitimate criticism of Israel.

We came to our conclusions and I rewrote the report. It went out. I took recommendations from colleagues, but it was a very friendly and positive occasion. There was absolutely no partisan divide on it at all.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: I have one more quick question on that. Approximately how many witnesses did you have before the panel?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: We had five main commission sessions, as I recall, and we would take about seven or eight witnesses at a time. It was a two-hour slab, about five times, plus a lot more written evidence as well.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Right. Thank you for that.

Dr. Weisskirchen, I want to ask you about the narrative and what you refer to as the change in the story as it's told. Would you say that is occurring with Jewish and non-Jewish people? Would you say that as people who survived the Holocaust are passing away, even in the Jewish community that story is changing?

• (1140)

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: No, not in the Jewish community—

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: So that is remaining steadfast.

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: —but in some parts of the German community you see this shift. The problem is that if you look into,

say, the new literature that has been produced within the last two or three years, you will find out that even such a wonderful author as Günter Grass, a Nobel Prize winner, is changing slightly his personal experiences of the war.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Do you see the media challenging that at all? Are the media in Germany challenging that change in story, or are they letting it pass?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: No, no, it's a challenge for us in the political class and for NGOs working closely on this matter not to challenge this challenge, but to talk about what has really happened. What is the problem here? It's the psychological shift from guilt to a different understanding of what has happened in the past. So I guess it's a problem. The point here is that you have to talk about this problem, and it's up to us parliamentarians to come to the core of the problem and to lay out, on one hand, an understanding of what is really going on, but also, on the other hand, to improve the conditions for historians and teachers to tackle this challenge.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'd like to call now on Anita Neville.

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Thank you to the two of you for coming this long distance to be here this morning.

My first question is to Dr. MacShane. I'm interested in the process of the inquiry and what impact it had on constituents and the media. Did the process, as it went along, result in any concrete changes before you reported? And what has been the impact of the report itself on the general population? We know that anti-Semitism is not going away, but is there any mitigation of it or community-based responses to it?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: That was a good point.

There are about 270,000 Jews in Britain, out of a total population of 60 million, so for the vast majority of people it's not an issue. I have 8,000 Muslim, principally Kashmiri- or Pakistani-linked, constituents in my constituency. I assume there must be one or two Jewish people in my constituency, but if there are, I have never come across them.

I go to mosques regularly; I don't go into a synagogue or hardly even into a Catholic church. They burn up on Kashmiri issues, Muslim issues, including, of course, the Middle East conflict. What I would say, though, is that on the one hand, the report removed it from the realm of overexcited accusations that there is a tsunami of anti-Semitism affecting everybody; sometimes you get ridiculous statements in American papers that Europe is reverting back to the 1930s or that all Jewish people should now emigrate and leave Europe, which is silly. On the other hand, because we were able to detail it in a very factual way, it equally exposed the other lie, which is that anti-Semitism somehow is just an invention of those who want to avoid any criticism of Israel.

I would say the most sensitive area was probably anti-Semitism on the campus. I think vice-chancellors and university principals are not aware of the extent to which Jewish students who choose to show their affinities as Jews, part of which will be support for the Jewish State of Israel, can be really quite heavily intimidated. They are not allowed to present their case at student unions. They are being confronted with the notion that they are responsible for apartheid; it obviously hurts any Jewish person, I imagine, to be put on a par with a South African racist supremacist state. They are accused of being Nazis and the rest of it. They have their meetings disrupted. It is not so much to have protection by university authorities as to at least be able to make their case freely in the way that those who argue that one should support Hamas and that Israel has no right to exist, etc., are allowed to make their case if they choose.

That is one of the trickiest areas. The university lecturers' trade union actually faced a call at its congress to boycott Israel, admittedly on a very small vote of activists. They would never dream of boycotting Saudi Arabia, Iran, or Egypt, where there are statements about Jews that are wholly unacceptable, but there is always a double standard when it comes to Israel. They were very sensitive to our criticisms and came back, but I think it actually strengthened the hands of those within the university profession or the university trade union to say, "Look, this is what an all-party group of MPs without an axe to grind is saying." It had that general impact, and it has forced some change in tone in a lot of what I might call the overly easy and facile, particularly Islamist, ideological criticism of Israel. They tempered what they wanted to say, so that if they were going to attack Israel, which is perfectly reasonable, they'd do it on the grounds of strict evidence rather than just as an all-purpose smear. I hope we have given some confidence back to the Jewish community.

Students say to us, "Look, there are some universities we won't even consider applying to because we are Jews." That is a terrible statement to make in a democracy. If any Muslim kid came to me and said, "Mr. MacShane, we don't dare apply to university X or university Y because, as Muslims, we know we're going to have a rough time there," I would go insane. I would make that a front-page story in our papers. I would raise it in Parliament with all my vigour.

• (1145)

I think if I have to do that for my Muslim constituents, I also have a citizen's duty, if that is put to me, to make the point in a responsible way about Jewish kids feeling they can't be Jews in the full sense—these are British citizens who are Jews—in some universities because vice-chancellors and university student unions do not actually accept the idea that making Jewish students feel uncomfortable about their Jewishness is a real phenomenon.

Hon. Anita Neville: Do I have more time?

The Chair: You have just about run out of time, but I can give you one more minute if you want.

Hon. Anita Neville: Professor Weisskirchen, I'm fascinated by this cultural phenomenon that you talk about. Has it been documented? Are people, academics, or media documenting it, writing about it, or speaking to it?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: They have not been up to now. I think more research has to be done on this phenomenon. It has yet to be

seen. There have been merely indications you can follow to see that there has been kind of a paradigm change, a shift in the self-understanding of older people. Talking about it provides a good tool against it, for instance. You have to talk about this phenomenon in an open, public way. You have to say that there is a problem, and then you have to address it. There is a public debate on this point going on in Germany. That's a healthy thing, because if we as parliamentarians, for instance, don't talk about it, then this new shift may gain strength. We must put a stop to this right from the beginning.

I would add that with regard to the question you have raised, in my country, in my parliament, last year on November 4 we decided to follow the line of your inquiry. We do have a different tool. In September of this year, the Minister of the Interior established a panel of experts—no parliamentarians, but experts who will look at it from different angles, those on a scientific level as well as practitioners—to create a new report on the development of anti-Semitism in Germany. It should be published in 2011. In my opinion, it will take too long to produce this, but Parliament has decided on this point and now these ten experts are working on this, and they will publish their report, alas, in 2011.

• (1150)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ken Dryden.

Hon. Ken Dryden (York Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you both for being here.

The question I would like to ask has to do with context. In the work both of you have done, and in terms of the incidence of anti-Semitism and the anti-Semitism you have experienced, are you saying that as there have been other times of greater or lesser degrees of anti-Semitism, you are finding a greater incidence of it in the present than you would have found in recent times? Are you saying that in looking at those incidents, you're seeing that it's not just a matter of some people finding a way of getting attention more vividly, or of others looking at it more closely and counting more carefully than might have been the case before, but that you are seeing something that is different, and that you are troubled by the difference you see?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: Yes. I assume anti-Semitism has always been around. It certainly was prevalent in Britain before 1939. The Duke of Wellington at the time chaired a committee that had on its letterhead the initials "PJ", which stood for "Perish Judah", and the *Daily Mail* newspaper campaigned regularly against allowing Jews from Germany into the United Kingdom. That sort of thing, one kind of assumes, stopped dead after 1945, for reasons that we can all understand. But there's a sense that in the last ten or twenty years it has resurfaced in different forms. We're talking about a very small number of people. I would say there are about 270,000 or 300,000 Jews in Britain, maybe half of whom are observant Jews. Nonetheless, many of them are made to feel that they haven't the right to be British and Jewish.

We fought to allow—and I'm thinking of part of my family history—people to be Catholic and British, to be Muslim and British, to be African-Caribbean and British, Pakistani or Sikh or Hindu and British, and there should be no contradiction in that. You should be able to follow your faith and your culture. There should be respect for it and for your affinities without that leading to you facing, to some extent, a degree of fear. It is ridiculous that Jews in Britain have to raise £4 million or £5 million just to ensure their security when they go to their places of worship. Catholics don't have to do that. As for Sikhs, certainly there have been tensions with Sikh issues in India, but I hope Sikh temples still can be gone to normally and the rest of it. So that is different.

Then in Britain you're actually getting people elected, not yet to the House of Commons but to the European Parliament—a man called Nick Griffin, along with one of his sidekicks. Griffin is a Holocaust denier. His only published work is called *Who are the Mind-Benders?*, which is a long rant about the secret lobby of Jews who secretly control the British media. On his farm in Wales he had two pigs, which he charmingly named Anne and Frank. This man is a racist. He's an Islamophobe, and yet he and his other party colleagues got close to a million votes in the European Parliament elections.

We have in the European Parliament now a man called Michal Kaminski, who's a Polish politician from the Law and Justice Party. In 2001 then President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski went to a place called Jedwabne in northeast Poland to apologize for a unique incident in Polish history. It was the massacre of about 1,400 Jews, burned to death, but by Poles during the period of the Russian-German occupation of that part of Europe. Poland as a whole had no quislings, no collaborators, no malice. It was solidly anti-Nazi, anti-German, but there was this one tragic incident. It was covered up by the Communists after 1945, and it actually took a very good historian, Jan T. Gross, who was actually at Yale—Charles Small might be able to tell you about him—who researched this very thoroughly and produced a path-breaking historical book in the year 2000. It exploded.

My father was Polish. He was a Polish army officer wounded in 1939. MacShane is actually my mother's name. He died when I was very young.

Poland was very uncomfortable with any accusation that it had killed Jews. It was a terrible massacre, but there were many Poles who saved Jews from the ghetto and Polish priests who went into concentration camps in place of Jews, so Poland must not be typecast in any way as an anti-Semitic race or nation.

So Kwasniewski went there to apologize, and this man, Kaminski, organized a giant local political campaign against him and said he shouldn't be apologizing and that he had smeared the Polish nation. Kaminski said he'd apologize for the massacre of Jews at Jedwabne when the Jews apologized for killing Poles. It may come as a surprise to the committee that this accusation was made. This man, Kaminski, is in the European Parliament, and even today, because he heads the little group in which the British Conservative MEPs sit, there is a huge controversy swirling in Britain about him, but he still will not apologize or say anything about being wrong.

●(1155)

You have three members of the Jobbik Hungarian party, whose leader in the European parliamentary campaign said on the record, "There are Jews who accuse me of being anti-Semitic; let me say to them they can take their circumcised"—and, Chairman, I'll not say the next word she used—"and shove it where they want." The Jobbik MEPs turned up in the uniform of the Iron Guard to try to take their seats.

You have Jean-Marie Le Pen, a Holocaust denier who is anti-Semitic, who is the doyen, the eldest European parliamentarian. We have a Latvian MEP whose party commemorates the Waffen SS.

These members are all elected, ladies and gentlemen. This is not the outer fringe. This is not David Duke. I'm sure there is a Canadian David Duke somewhere. These are people elected from within their own countries—from my country—to represent people in the European Parliament, and anti-Semitism, Jew hate, or... Mr. Griffin now says he supports Israel, but I don't think necessarily an expression of support of Israel whitewashes away years of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitic utterances.

It is what I call the banalization of anti-Semitism. It's not the same as it was in the 1920s or 1930s, but it's actually being incorporated into normal political discourse. In Britain we're being told that we have to listen to the BNP when they say there are too many black people or that immigrants are getting all the social housing. They aren't. Their statistics are always wrong. We have to address those concerns. I say I'm happy to talk about those concerns. They are the concerns of my white working-class voters. I want them to elect me, but I'm not going to refrain from saying that the line of these people on Jews and the slow re-entry of a banalized anti-Semitism into European political discourse are not desperately worrying.

●(1200)

The Chair: Thank you.

Was there a further question there?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: I have only a short remark on this banalization of the Holocaust. Dresden is the capital of Saxony. In Saxony you do have neo-Nazis in the regional parliament, and in Saxony the NPD, the neo-Nazis inside parliament, were trying to banalize the Holocaust because of the bombardment of Dresden. They talked about the Dresden Holocaust. This is a shift in the understanding of what the Holocaust really meant. We have to clarify what the Holocaust was and fight against all forms of banalizing it.

The Chair: Thank you.

I have been quite generous with the allotment of time for the members of the committee. However, we do have to finish up part one by 12:20, so perhaps members could be a little bit shorter with their questions and the answers could also be shorter.

David.

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): I feel disappointed that your generosity ended with me, Mr. Chairman. However, I am extraordinarily grateful for our two witnesses.

I have just been listening to the long litany of individuals.... There is a broad spectrum of racism, unfortunately, globally and in our nation. Racism is evil and too profuse. I guess one racist is too many. Anti-Semitism seems to attract, in an evil way, the most sophisticated and most meticulous. They are insidious in the way they get into public institutions. If there is any mind-bending, it is on their part.

Professor Weisskirchen, you mentioned that Jewish people feel they are in danger. Were you talking specifically in the German context, or were you talking about the work you do with the OSCE?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: I meant the OSCE.

Mr. David Sweet: I want to follow up on another comment you made about the OSCE. You said there's a limited amount of information available. Were you suggesting that is the case over the broad spectrum, or that member governments weren't educating their population on the existence and rise of anti-Semitism?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: Number one, they are responsible for delivering all the recommendations that they have accepted—regarding data collection, for instance. They are not ready to fulfill their obligations.

Number two, in my understanding, all of the governments besides Great Britain and others, I have to mention, should try to fight against anti-Semitism in a clear-cut way, especially, as I mentioned, through education, because education is key for the generations to come. So in this regard, I do hope that governments will use all the different instruments available, not only the decisions that the OSCE has taken, but the work of historians or philosophers—that of Charles Taylor in this country, for instance, who is one of the best philosophers I know. The instruments are there. Put them in place and implement them.

• (1205)

Mr. David Sweet: You mentioned being very specific, so even when you're talking about educating about racism, you are specifically defining the perniciousness of anti-Semitism.

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: To be quite frank on this point, racism is kind of a framework definition. Anti-Semitism is a different form of racism. One of the experiences I have had serving as an OSCE officer, so to speak, is that sometimes people think Islamophobia, as somebody mentioned, and anti-Semitism are the same thing. They are not. There is a clear-cut sharp difference between anti-Semitism and other forms of xenophobia. In Germany, we've learned anti-Semitism, and the world knows it can lead to a holocaust, which can destroy democracy. So this is a different form of putting it up again, or referring to it as racism. You cannot mix together all the different forms of xenophobia. If you do, then in my opinion, you cannot have a clear-cut understanding of the real differences between them.

Mr. David Sweet: Thank you, Professor.

Dr. MacShane, you mentioned that some people on your inquiry panel actually became specialists in different institutions and universities that have been mentioned here a couple of times. Did you find in your inquiry other seedbeds, or hot spots—whatever terminology you choose—public institutions where anti-Semitism was growing?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: We were worried about one or two trade unions. I think of my own union. I was president of the

National Union of Journalists 30 years ago. By a vote of 56 to 49 at its annual conference, it also voted to boycott Israel. This produced a huge hullabaloo when the other 30,000 members of the union heard about this. The decision was withdrawn, because clearly if there is one place where there is relentless criticism of the Israeli government, it's in the papers of Israel, so to call for a boycott of contacts with the journalists of Israel was completely counter-productive. It was the underreporting phenomenon in the police services and certainly the universities we were concerned about. Also, it wasn't so much that it wasn't taken seriously, because after all, I'd been number two at the foreign office, and British foreign secretaries certainly would be alive to the issue. However, there was a failure to actually comprehend that this required international diplomatic action, not just international parliamentary coalitions and not just action aimed at the governments, mainly but not exclusively, within the Middle East, which were sanctioning anti-Semitic discourse and statements.

The United States government, for example, given the interpretation of its first amendment, allows the Internet to be the main publisher and purveyor of anti-Semitic hate. That really worried us very considerably. As a former journalist, I'm a first amendment, freedom of expression enthusiast. However, it's worrying that the Internet allows for so much of this to go on. Also, what we're not aware of within our own community, thanks to satellite television, thanks to i-Play, which is also the Internet, is that an awful lot of our communities are receiving information only from Al Jazeera, or from PTV—that's Pakistan TV—or GTV, which I know about in that community. I'm sure it's mirrored in other communities. They're not hearing other arguments from the media of the country where they're living, and where they're citizens, and where their future generations will grow up. That's a rather more complicated bit of discourse.

Our inquiry threw out things that I think nobody really thought about before. I'd be fascinated to read the report on your work when it's finished, to see what you dig up.

I'll tell you a problem, if I may, Mr. Chairman. Gert Weisskirchen is right to say, look, these countries don't list anti-Semitism, but to my horror, I have seen a Council of Europe report—and I serve on the council—in which Britain is branded as the country with the most instances of anti-Semitism. Why? Because thanks to our work, the instances are now listed. Then suddenly you get named for being a place where there's an awful lot of terrible stuff on anti-Semitism just because you have actually undertaken the work of insisting that it be fully reported and brought into the public debate.

• (1210)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Jeff Watson.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for appearing. The ultimate success of both the inquiry panel and its report will be measured by how easily the hearings and the report that come out of this can be understood by and communicated to the broader public. We live in a world of iPods and sound bite journalism. With that understanding in mind, and making some of these questions a little...we start from a different standpoint, having been briefed to a certain extent on some of the finer points of your presentations and your work.

For the broader public, however, as a starting point, can you give us a working definition of the old versus the new anti-Semitism, which can be easily understood by Joe or Jane Public out on the street? Then I'll ask some follow-up questions.

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: The old anti-Semitism, for me, is the classic millennium-old Jew hate that ends up in pogroms and ultimately the Holocaust, the obligatory expulsion or fleeing of Jews because they face physical violence and death.

The new anti-Semitism seeks to belittle the status and identity of Jews within democratic communities, treat them as less than 100% full-class citizens, and oblige them to take up positions, particularly vis-à-vis Israel, they are uncomfortable with, which brings back into play the pernicious notion of the cabal or the secret lobby that gave rise to the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", which now reappears in the idea of the Jewish lobby that controls capital and state policy.

It is the discourse of anti-Semitism that glides into a lot of writing and easy journalism: Israel as an apartheid state, as a Nazi state, as a state governed entirely by war criminals. I think this discourse needs combatting. I am all for every criticism of Israel that anybody wants to make, but I think this is much broader and is sponsored by states for the first time since 1939. I don't think Hitler actually tried to sell anti-Semitism around the world. I can take you to Wahhabi-financed mosques in Britain where there's material on sale that is openly anti-Semitic. I can take you into Muslim schools where kids are taught that Jews are pigs, for example. I think that is part of the new anti-Semitism.

There isn't really a totally satisfactory definition. There is a book almost every six months or every year on it that works its way at the problem.

Mr. Jeff Watson: Did you want to take a stab at that?

Prof. Gert Weisskirchen: I would only add to it, because I fully agree with what Denis has talked about. If you are comparing Israeli politicians with Nazis, then you have crossed the line. If you look at several journalists writing about that in this sense, then they personally think they are only criticizing, but by doing this in that regard, they are crossing the line towards anti-Semitism.

•(1215)

Mr. Jeff Watson: I think one of you raised the critique that anti-Semitism may be used as a cover to quell legitimate criticism of Israel. In the opposite sense, is there the idea that free speech can be used in the opposite sense as a cover for those who espouse anti-Semitism? Take us into the realm of what could constitute reasonable limits to free speech.

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: That's a huge philosophical question. There are obvious answers in the formal incitements to violence—" Hamas, Hamas, Jews to the gas", as shouted in demonstrations this year. The difficulty comes with an approach by journalists that just

buys some of the line that is very strong, particularly promoted, I'd say, by Islamists....

And, please, I draw a distinction between Islam the religion— Muslims, the followers of that religion—and Islamism and Islamists, an ideology that you have to read the text of. One of the things we need to do is return to the text. We all deal in words. If you just look at Islamist text, old and new, the words are extraordinarily clear and unambiguous. They're not narrowly on Israel. They are about Jews, full stop, period.

So I think that has to be resisted strongly. I also think you do need to have more studies in our universities. We have the chair of anti-Semitic studies at Yale, which Dr. Small will talk to you about later. I think that's the only one of its kind outside possibly Israel. We just need now to look at the texts that seek to portray Jews as second-class, third-class, inferior citizens, or even non-citizens at all, in an awful lot of discourse.

The point I make continually to my friends...and as I say, in my constituency, I have 8,000 Muslim constituents, some of whom do raise all of these issues very forcibly. I say to them, "Guys, until the discourse on the Middle East explicitly shuns anti-Semitic tropes and references, you won't make peace. You've got a case in many questions of freedom, access, Palestinian statehood, occupation, and so on. That's fair. But until you combat that...."

It's not helped when a respectable Swedish paper like *Aftonbladet*, a left social democratic one, publishes a big article this summer saying that the Israeli army kidnaps and kills Palestinians to extract, while they're just newly dead, their organs to sell on the international market.

It's not helped when *El Mundo*, the paper I write for, a conservative paper in Spain, in commemorating the start of World War Two, interviewed, of all British historians, not Andrew Roberts, Niall Ferguson, or Antony Beevor; no, they went to David Irving, a notorious Holocaust denier. He had a page to rant about how Hitler was misled and how the statistics on the Holocaust aren't clear.

This is what I mean about the new anti-Semitism. It's just creeping back into play in a very banalized way.

I'll finish by saying that the Community Security Trust in the summer produced a report showing 638 attacks on Jews in the first six months of this year in the U.K. Not a single newspaper carried a single word of that report. I think if I produced a report saying there had been 700 clearly identified attacks on Muslims in Britain, that would have been on a few front pages.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Professor Cotler.

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): This is a variation on the last question. I know you've also addressed it, but let me put this one question.

As chair of the British all-party parliamentary commission of inquiry into anti-Semitism, you would have heard this statement quite often—namely, not only that legitimate criticism of Israel is being mislabelled as anti-Semitism, but also that the inquiry itself is an attempt to chill legitimate criticism of Israel.

How would you have responded to that?

• (1220)

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: All I could say is it sure as hell didn't work, because criticism of Israel rolls on and on like the Red Sea. It just never stops. Frankly, when an Israeli Prime Minister is quoted as saying that Rahm Emanuel, Mr. Obama's Chief of Staff, is a self-hating Jew, you just think that with friends like that, Israel doesn't need enemies. But there we go. That's an aside.

I think we have brought a lot of it out into the open and made people stop and think. I cannot repeat too often: criticism of Israel is legitimate and is not anti-Semitic unless it crosses certain lines, like Jews are Nazis, Jews are baby killers, Jews are the Gestapo, and the rest of it. As I say, not all critics of Israel are anti-Semites, but I have not found many anti-Semites who don't criticize Israel, though there are some. It's a new little phenomenon of people who are happy to play identity nationalist populist politics in their own country, including criticisms of Jews in ugly language, but insist they are defenders of the State of Israel as well. These become very complicated circular arguments, and we need to tease them out.

The Chair: Do you want one more question?

Hon. Irwin Cotler: There is one other one. Based on the findings of your inquiry, what did you determine were the primary sources of contemporary anti-Semitism in the U.K.?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: I would say it's a lack of sensitivity to the affinities that Jewish people have and their own sense of identity, which come both from right and left parties—mainstream parties, not the extreme right and the extreme left. We didn't go into too much, but there have been comments in the House of Commons about when Jewish people make points about the Holocaust, or the wrong people having died in the gas chamber, or there are questions about who someone is really loyal to, Israel or Britain. There are a lot of comments from the left, which see the Palestinian struggle now as the most legitimate and noble struggle of the underdog, of the oppressed, now that communism is finished. South African apartheid is finished. Latin American authoritarianism is over. So what is left is identity with the Palestinian struggle, which is perfectly legitimate but which can also trip over into anti-Semitism.

Undoubtedly, there are spikes when there are very ugly events in the Middle East if Israel in particular ripostes forcibly to defend herself and her people. Sadly, it must be said that the slow rise of Islamist politics and ideology and publications undoubtedly have some influence. I would ask the committee to consider reading a book called *The Islamist* by Ed Husain. Ed is his short version of Mohamed. This book has had great success in England. I'm sure it might be on sale here. As a student in the 1990s, he was indoctrinated into openly anti-Semitic discussion and teaching. The British government in those days was just paying no attention to it. There's a man called Sheikh al-Qaradawi, who is the theologian of suicide bombing and who was allowed into Britain four times, oddly enough by a Jewish Home Secretary, Michael Howard. He now has

been banned, but there was a long period when we weren't paying any attention at all to Islamists.

I keep stressing this. I'm not talking about Muslims. I'm not talking about the religion, but about the Islamist ideologues who were allowed to operate without any intellectual or political challenge, and I think they really twisted the minds of a lot of young people. The fight back is beginning now, and these guys are being challenged intellectually and politically, not just administratively by someone saying they can't come into Britain, but actually by someone saying "Your arguments are incoherent and wrong."

It is a combination of all those factors—no single reason or cause—and each one has to be taken out separately. But I'm very worried about the point Gert Weisskirchen made about what I called the lowering of the Holocaust as a central historical event, the idea that Stalin and Hitler, Communism and Nazism, were equivalent, the notion that the awful crimes of Stalin—mass famines, mass executions, show trials, the Katyn massacre—were the same as the calm, industrial, high-tech, precision-engineered transportation from all over a continent to death camps, which we call the Holocaust. That certainly is a problem in eastern Europe, with particularly the right saying, "What the left did to us, what the Communists did to us, was as bad as or worse than what the Nazis or the Germans did." If that argument gains traction, then you simply start the actual banalization of the Holocaust. It just becomes another historic event, like other mass murders, genocide, famines that killed people, or terrible slaughters that happened in the context of wars or oppression. That really worries me, and it would be a huge success for the anti-Semites if the Holocaust were made equivalent to the unacceptable, atrocious crimes that Stalin and the Soviets and Communists have committed.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you.

The last question goes to Scott Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have one question for Dr. MacShane. Your story about how the National Union of Journalists voted to boycott Israel or Israeli products and Israeli journalists by a vote of 56 to 40 out of 30,000 reminds me of a thought that I've had vis-à-vis a similar phenomenon that I think is occurring here in Canada. It seems to me those who are trying to gain media attention for the idea of boycotting Israeli products or Israeli culture are fairly small in numbers but seek out organizations that have certain characteristics—democratic organizations with a low voter turnout and if necessary a larger membership and low barriers to entry into membership.

We have something called the Mountain Equipment Co-op, of which I'm a member. We recently had an incident of this sort. It's very easy to get a membership and easy to engage in proxy voting. Is it your impression the same sort of thing is going on in Britain and that it's a general tactic that's out there?

Rt. Hon. Denis MacShane: Yes. That's actually the nature of the political beast. I can remember over the years voting to boycott Chilean wine, South African apples, and probably Israeli fruit at some stage, being in organizations that did that. It is normal. I think the difference is when there's actually a wholly one-sided decision by a small number of activists who come to a conference and make a couple of powerful speeches and win a vote. I guess that might even happen in Canada. I don't know. Perhaps everything is much more rational and calm in Canadian political discourse.

It is a problem. When there's a flare-up, it's usually embarrassing for the leadership, I must say. The general secretaries of these outfits just don't like it one little bit.

I'm in the Labour Party. Undoubtedly Israel has lost an awful lot of traction and support among the democratic left in a way that worries me. I think this committee perhaps needs to think rather more seriously about how it makes its case to my side of the political family. I'd want to go to war with a bit bigger battalion on my side than just relying on Fox News and Mark Steyn.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Denis MacShane and Professor Gert Weisskirchen, for being here. We really very much appreciate your testimony.

We will now take a five-minute break and come back for part two.

- _____ (Pause) _____
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- (1235)

The Chair: Thank you very much. We're now resumed.

We have with us three individuals. Professor Irwin Cotler is chair of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism. He will be followed by Gregg Rickman, the former special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism for the U.S. State Department, and Professor Charles Small, director of the Yale initiative for the study of anti-Semitism at Yale University.

Professor Cotler, would you like to start?

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Chair, Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

- (1240)

Hon. Irwin Cotler: My basic thesis today, which finds expression in the larger paper before you is as follows. What we are witnessing today is a new, escalating, sophisticated, globalizing, virulent, and even lethal anti-Semitism reminiscent of the atmospherics of the 1930s and without parallel or precedent since the end of the Second World War.

Indeed it is this pandemic of anti-Semitism, as it has been called, that caused Nobel peace laureate and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, normally given to understatement, to recently state, and I quote:

[May I] share with you the feeling of urgency, if not, emergency, that we believe Antisemitism represents and calls for. I must confess to you, I have not felt the way I feel now since 1945. I feel there are reasons for us to be concerned, even afraid.... [N]ow is the time to mobilize the efforts of all of humanity.

It is this recent intensification and escalation of anti-Semitism, which caused concern and found expression in Elie Wiesel's words, that brought together some 125 parliamentarians from over 40 countries for the historic founding conference last February in London of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism, and that resulted in the adoption of the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism, which I would like to commend to all parliamentarians and to the Canadian public, and beyond that generally, as one of the most important templates we have with respect to understanding and indeed combatting anti-Semitism.

As the closing of the London Declaration itself affirmed, and I quote:

We are alarmed at the resurrection of the old language of prejudice and its modern manifestations—in rhetoric and political action—against Jews, Jewish belief and practice and the State of Israel.

One might ask at this point the reasons for Elie Wiesel feeling the need to share his feeling of urgency, if not emergency, about anti-Semitism, as he put it. What made him say that he had not felt this way since 1945? Why the expression of alarm in the London Declaration?

Now, the concerns could include—and one might find reference to this in my own paper, and you heard it in the excellent testimony this morning from our two witnesses—the dramatic increase in attacks on Jews and on Jewish religious and educational and communal institutions. I was struck by Denis MacShane's remarks that when there was this spike in these attacks, it went unreported in the media in the U.K. They could include the growing and global incidences of academic, university, trade union, and related boycotts, the effect of which, in practice if not necessarily in intent, is the singling out of Israel and Jews for selective opprobrium and exclusion. They could include the ugly canard of double loyalty, to which reference was made also in the testimony this morning. They could include the widespread and rapid transmission and circulation of anti-Semitic hate and incitement by satellite TV, radio, and the Internet.

But I suspect, Mr. Chairman, that there are five manifestations of this pandemic that may account for Elie Wiesel's apprehension and anguish—although I don't want to minimize any that I've just now mentioned—and his deep sense of pain and alarm, and the larger implications that these five manifestations may have, ironically enough, for the larger struggle against racism, for the integrity of the UN, and for the authority of international law. I said “ironically enough” because one would have thought that these things would not be implicated in the manifestations of anti-Semitism, but I'm going to suggest that in fact they are, that anti-Semitism in fact marches under the cover of this struggle against racism, marches under the protective cover of the United Nations, and invokes the imprimatur of international law. That's what makes it so sophisticated, but also what makes it so insidious.

Let me just say, so that no adverse inferences will be drawn, that there are two caveats that underlie my analysis, which should not have to bear mention, but they do. The first is that none of the manifestations or indicators of anti-Semitism I'm going to discuss are intended to suggest that Israel somehow is not accountable for any violations of human rights and humanitarian law. On the contrary, Israel is accountable, as is any other state. But that, as I will try to point out, is a problem—"like any other state"—with the singling out of Israel for differential and discriminatory treatment in the international arena.

•(1245)

The second caveat is that I'm not referring to critiques—even serious critiques, rigorous critiques—of Israeli policy or Zionist ideology, however sometimes distasteful these critiques might be. But the converse is also true. I think this parliamentary committee must bear in mind that anti-Semitic critiques cannot mask themselves under the exculpatory disclaimer that, "If I criticize Israel, they will say I am anti-Semitic", and then go ahead and say anti-Semitic things in order to hide behind the disclaimer.

In the words of *New York Times* commentator Thomas Friedman:

Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is vile. But singling out Israel for opprobrium and international sanctions—out of all proportion to any other party in the Middle East—is anti-Semitic, and not saying so is dishonest.

Let me now turn to the five manifestations of anti-Semitism, which I'll try to deal with briefly, Mr. Chairman.

The first manifestation or indicator of this new anti-Semitism, and, I would suggest to you, the most lethal manifestation of it, is what I would call genocidal anti-Semitism. This is not a term that I would use lightly or easily. I'm referring here to the genocide convention's prohibition against a direct and public incitement to genocide.

Simply put, if anti-Semitism is the most enduring of hatreds and genocide is the most horrific of crimes, then the convergence of the genocidal intent embodied in anti-Semitic ideology is the most toxic of combinations.

There are three manifestations of this genocidal anti-Semitism.

The first is the state-sanctioned genocidal anti-Semitism of Ahmadinejad's Iran, which has been dramatized by the repeated parading in the streets of Tehran of a Shahab-3 missile draped in the emblem "Wipe Israel off the map", while exhorting the crowds in chants of "Death to Israel", and demonizing both the State of Israel as a cancerous tumour to be excised and the Jewish people as evil incarnate.

A second manifestation of the genocidal anti-Semitism is in the covenants, charters, platforms, and policies of such terrorist movements as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda, which call not only for the destruction of Israel and the killing of Jews, wherever they may be, but also for the perpetration of acts of terror in furtherance of that objective.

The third manifestation of this genocidal anti-Semitism is the religious fatwas, or execution writs, where these genocidal calls in mosques and media are held out as religious obligations, where Jews and Judaism are characterized as perfidious enemies of Islam, and where Israel becomes, as it were, the Salman Rushdie of the nations.

In a word, Israel is the only state in the world and the Jewish people are the only people in the world who are the objects of standing threats by governmental, religious, and other terrorist organizations with respect to a genocidal anti-Semitism.

This brings me to the second indicator. I'm referring here to political anti-Semitism, the denial of fundamental rights to the Jewish people and only to the Jewish people.

In other words, if genocidal anti-Semitism is a public call for or incitement to the destruction of Israel, political anti-Semitism is the denial of Israel's right to exist to begin with, or the denial of the Jewish people's right to self-determination, if not even their denial as a people.

There are four manifestations of these phenomena. I deal with them in my paper. Here, in an abbreviated fashion, I will identify two.

The first is the denial of the Jewish people's right to self-determination. As Martin Luther King put it, it's the "...denial to the Jews of the same right, the right to self-determination that we accord to African nations and all other peoples of the globe. In short, it is anti-Semitism...."

The second feature of political anti-Semitism involves denying the legitimacy, if not the existence, of the State of Israel. In other words, just as classical anti-Semitism was anchored in the denial of the very legitimacy of the Jewish religion, so the new anti-Jewishness is anchored in the denial of the very legitimacy of the Jews as a people, as embodied by the Jewish State of Israel, or indeed their denial of being a people to begin with.

•(1250)

Perhaps I just might quote, to conclude this second indicator, a distinguished scholar and lawyer from the U.K., because he may not be able to testify before us. I think his words here bear mention. I quote Anthony Julius, again a person often understated in his characterization and critique of anti-Semitism, who summed up this second indicator of political anti-Semitism as follows:

To maintain that the very existence of Israel is without legitimacy, and to contemplate with equanimity the certain catastrophe of its dismantling...is to embrace—however unintentionally, and notwithstanding all protestations to the contrary—a kind of anti-Semitism indistinguishable in its compass and consequences from practically any that has yet been inflicted on Jews.

This brings me now to a third indicator of anti-Semitism. I'm referring here now to ideological anti-Semitism, or anti-Semitism under the cover of the struggle against racism. Simply put, while the first two indicators I refer to are overt, public, and clearly demonstrable, ideological anti-Semitism is much more sophisticated and arguably a more pernicious expression of the new anti-Semitism. Indeed, it might even serve as an ideological support system for the first two indicators, though these are prejudicial and pernicious enough indicators in their own right to not even need this support.

Here, ideological anti-Semitism, simply put, finds expression not in any genocidal incitement against Jews and Israel or overt denial of the Jewish people and Israel's right to exist; rather, ideological anti-Semitism—and this is what gives it its sophisticated form—disguises itself as part of the struggle against racism. Indeed, it marches under the protective cover of the United Nations and the international struggle against racism.

There are two manifestations of this and they have a particular Canadian dimension.

The first is the indictment of Israel as an apartheid state. This involves more than the simple indictment of Israel as an apartheid state, which is the kind of rhetoric that has been heard on campus and the like. It involves the call for the dismantling of Israel as an apartheid state, because under international law apartheid is defined as a crime against humanity.

As was evidenced by the events at the 2001 World Conference against Racism in Durban, this indictment is not limited to divestment. It is about the actual dismantling of the State of Israel based on the notion that apartheid is a crime against humanity.

The second manifestation of ideological anti-Semitism involves the characterization—this was mentioned by Denis MacShane and I won't go into it—of Israel not only as an apartheid state and one that must be dismantled as part of the struggle against racism, but as a Nazi state, and so the call for its dismantling is not just hortatory but imperative, because how can you have an apartheid Nazi state existing as part of the international community?

To conclude on this indicator, what's so disturbing about this ideological anti-Semitism is not simply the use of these defamatory and de-legitimizing indictments that call for the dismantling of the Jewish state, but in particular the masking of this ideological anti-Semitism as if it were part of the struggle against racism. That's what makes it so sophisticated, so pernicious, and, I would say, so hypocritical.

The fourth manifestation is legalized anti-Semitism. If ideological anti-Semitism seeks to mask itself under the banner of anti-racism, legalized anti-Semitism is, if it can be so, even more sophisticated and insidious. Here, this legalized anti-Semitism simultaneously seeks to mask itself under the banner of human rights to invoke the authority of international law and to operate under the protective cover of the UN.

In a word, and in an inversion of human rights language and law, the singling out of the Jewish people for differential and discriminatory treatment in the international arena, or its denial of international due process, is "legalized". My paper gives examples of it. For reasons of time, I will not go into it.

I will only say that the instrument for the promotion and protection of human rights in the international arena today, the standard-setting for international law, the United Nations Council on Human Rights, in its resolutions—I'll just give one example; 80% of its resolutions have condemned one member state in the international arena. Call it X; it happens to be Israel.

•(1255)

But no less important, the major human rights violators have enjoyed exculpatory immunity, with not one resolution against Iran or against Sudan—and I can go on—thereby demonstrating the singling out of one member state for differential discriminatory treatment. There are other examples in my paper; I won't go into it.

I will go now to my last indicator, and that is the lie that will not die. I'm referring here to the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion". For over 100 years, the world has been suffused with the most pervasive, persistent, and pernicious group libel in history, known as the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", the tsarist forgery that proclaimed an international Jewish conspiracy bent on world domination and responsible for all the evils in the world.

Today, the lie that would not die now underpins the most outrageous of international conspiracy thinking and incitement, targeting first Jews and then the international Zionist conspiracy in Israel. With just some of many examples, I will move to a close; I could use this indicator alone as a disturbing phenomenon of this new anti-Semitism.

So it is, then, that Jews are accused of being behind the 9/11 attacks and that they had forewarning of the attacks and therefore left the building; that Jewish doctors are held responsible for inculcating Palestinians with the AIDS virus; that Jewish scientists are responsible for the propagation of the avian flu; that a Jewish astronaut is responsible for the explosion of the Columbia space shuttle; that Jews are behind the publication of the Danish cartoons and the Pope's defilement of Islam; that Jews are responsible for the war in Iraq; and that genocides such as Darfur are orchestrated by the Jews. And on and on this goes.

Now, it was not long before this same libellous inheritance respecting the Jews had been transferred to Israel, to the international Zionist conspiracy, bringing together the old and the new protocols in a conceptual and linguistic symmetry that blamed Israel and Zionists for all of the above things that were once blamed on the Jews. There are some very recent examples, Mr. Chairman.

These examples, with which I move to a close, have come up only since the February 2009 meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism. So they're not in my paper; they've occurred in the last six months alone, and I'm giving only some examples. In the resurrection of the contemporary blood libel and the protocols, we find the following.

We find a slanderous article in Sweden's most popular newspaper *Aftonbladet*, to which Denis MacShane referred, holding that Jews—in this case Israelis—abducted Palestinians in a conspiracy with American rabbis, killing them to steal their organs for transplant. And as lies have long legs, this libel made its way around the world and found expression in the international media in Canada as well.

Large circulation daily newspapers such as *Al Watan* in Qatar and *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* have crudely manipulated the swine flu epidemic, which has caused such apprehension internationally and now here in Canada, to demonize Israel and its leaders by blaming them now for the outbreak of the swine flu. So you have Israeli leaders being pictured in media with faces of pigs, because we know the symbol and disdain for the pig in Islamic culture; these are now to be found in Mideast media while Israel is blamed for the swine flu.

Holland's daily, *De Telegraaf*, held that the flu pandemics are an international Jewish conspiracy to reduce the world's population, the whole reminiscent of the classic blood libel of the Jews as poisoners of the international well.

Palestinian and Mideast television have also reported their own "exclusives", broadcast internationally over the last few months, reaching the Muslim population internationally and here in Canada as well, to the effect that Israelis have released giant killer rats to attack Palestinians; that Nazi-like medical experiments are being conducted on Palestinian prisoners; and that Israel deliberately infects Palestinians with AIDS. I can go on. You can appreciate the fallout of this kind of lie that will not die.

Mr. Chairman, it is this old/new anti-Semitism that I've sought to summarize before you—and other indicators are in my paper—and that underpins and indeed necessitates the establishment of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism, as it did the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism. Silence, Mr. Chairman, is not an option.

The time has come not only to sound the alarm, for the reasons I've tried to share with you, but to act, for as history has taught us only too well, while it may begin with Jews, it does not end with Jews. Anti-Semitism is the canary in the mine shaft of evil and it threatens us all.

•(1300)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you, Professor Cotler.

Dr. Gregg Rickman.

Dr. Gregg Rickman (Former Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism for the U.S. State Department, As an Individual): Mr. Chairman and members of this esteemed committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the state of anti-Semitism in the world today.

As a matter of background, I served in the United States Department of State as the first U.S. special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism, serving from 2006 to 2009. During that time, I travelled around the world to 28 countries, including many countries with significant Muslim populations, some of whom espoused a mindset and collection of historical and political biases that were very disturbing.

Specifically to this point, I will address the subject of relations between Jewish communities and ethnic and Muslim minorities in Europe and how these relations have impacted the fate of Jewish communities on that continent. I will finish with a few recommendations.

In my travels, I found that in many of these Muslim countries, or in countries with large Muslim populations, the relationship between the two communities is tense at best. On the one hand, Muslim community leaders tell me they respect the role Jews have made for themselves, admiring the access Jewish leaders have and the influence and relative wealth the community has come to accumulate. On the other hand, there is jealousy. One Muslim leader in southern France told me he wanted to catch up with Jewish groups organizationally. This leader spoke to me about a "competition of memories" with Jews, pointedly expressing a problem.

This goes to the point of Professor Weisskirchen earlier today. His concerns centred on Muslims' perception of their comparative disadvantage in Europe vis-à-vis the Jews. He told me about real societal discrimination against Muslims in employment, religious observance, and in general daily life, not at all the responsibility of the Jewish community. Yet despite the perception of their status, they offer up the support of the Jews in southern France and how they exhibit that support towards Israel as the real reasons for the present situation.

He complained that Jews came as colonialists, with other Europeans, to North Africa, received French citizenship, and then moved to France. Muslims, on the other hand, lived in French-speaking North Africa and also emigrated to France, but were denied the same level of acceptance. These same Jews, he said, now unfairly appropriate the history of the Holocaust, and he intimated that it was not their history to claim. Now we Algerians, he told me, suffer from it.

Many Muslims believe their suffering locks Muslim communities and individuals in a second-class position. Yet this view, according to the director of one Dutch NGO in Amsterdam, is not necessarily the correct one. According to him, the community itself is not without blame in this regard. Young Muslims' own cultural and religious reluctance to integrate does not help matters. Their diminished prospects for employment are tied to their reluctance to seek proper schooling or even higher levels of education.

I have been told of this problem in Germany as well. The effects on Muslim teenagers of not staying in school were explained to me in great detail. Dropping out of school places them at a clear disadvantage economically and socially. The fact has been reinforced by a study published by the Open Society Institute EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program, which found in 2007 that foreign-born German children were three times as likely as children born in Germany to stop at secondary school, failing to move on. Furthermore, in 1998, according to the report, about one-third of foreigners aged 20 to 29 remained without a professional qualification, compared to only 8% of Germans of the same age group. It has not gotten much better a decade later. Think, though, of the effects now on that age group self-deprived of an education.

In Dutch schools, as the Dutch NGO director and former Dutch parliamentarian Aayan Hirsi Ali explained to me, Muslim schoolchildren are disruptive in class, and teachers are reluctant to counter their obstreperous practices. Worse, according to another version of the Open Society study, in 2007 in the Netherlands, less than 10% of the Turkish and Moroccan students there finished higher education or university education.

As second-generation Muslims, these youth are caught in a netherworld. They don't feel fully European, and with inadequate Arabic language fluency, they don't feel fully Arab. Add a lack of education to this mix of circumstances and the sense of despair is only worse. These concerns have been expressed to me across Europe.

Confused European Muslim youth go back home, as it were, to the countries of their parents and grandparents, yearning to acquire that identity, but are rejected there as not wholly Moroccan, Algerian or Turkish. Rejected in both homes, they return to Europe confused, looking for meaning and of course someone to blame, and that is how they fall prey to charismatic imams, imported from abroad, usually from Turkey, Iran, or Pakistan, into mosques financed from abroad and under whose influence these people fall.

● (1305)

This need to blame, as well as the learned hatred, is passed on to younger Muslim kids, who harass Jews in west Amsterdam, for example, in the banlieue near Paris, and in other European cities. I've talked with a number of people in Amsterdam—rabbis, Jewish teenagers, and even elected officials—who told me stories of young Muslims who yell “Kill the Jews” and routinely throw rocks at Jews leaving synagogues or those daring to walk through Muslim neighbourhoods. As one Jewish leader in Europe told me, “Jews are the only ones who go to synagogue or school under police protection.” This has become a normal existence for Jews in Europe. I've seen it first-hand.

Due to this ongoing pattern of Muslim harassment of Jews in Europe, it has come to the point that an intentional segregation is taking place. Jewish families are moving out of mixed Muslim-Jewish neighbourhoods. Because of the frequency and intensity of anti-Jewish harassment, it is simply no longer worth living in these areas.

Moreover, according to Catholic Church officials and Jewish leaders in France, in 2007 nearly 60% of Jewish students attended private schools in France, Jewish or Catholic, with their parents fearing their security in the public schools. As in the Netherlands, teachers are unable to guarantee the safety of Jewish students.

I was told stories, fascinating stories but depressing ones, of ongoing efforts at interfaith work talking with Muslims in the banlieue outside of Paris. The efforts produced frightening results. I was told of declarations from Muslims warning those attempting this work that Jews were a “damned and rejected people”. I was told that one Muslim man declared, “Every day I pray for you to become a Muslim so I wouldn't be obligated to kill you.”

It must be clear that the discrimination Muslims face is not a myth, yet Muslim communities suggest a greater role for the problem and weave it into the story of their victimhood, taking on strong notes of succeeding the Jews as the newest victims of discrimination, all the while blaming them for their ills. “In broader terms,” I was told, “Arabs are Semites, and therefore, 'Islamaphobia' is a new kind of anti-Semitism.” I was told this repeatedly across Europe.

This sentiment was echoed to me by another source, who casually suggested that Islamaphobia in Europe is “ten times” that of anti-Semitism. I heard this comparison from Saudis, Emiratis, Egyptians,

Lebanese, and people all over the world. Yet just as Muslims accuse Jews of appropriating a history that they claim is not theirs, so too are they appropriating one themselves. We need to be clear about this point: anti-Semitism means discrimination or violence against Jews, not Muslims.

Relations between Muslim and Jewish communities are overwhelmed by the extension of the Middle East conflict to European shores. The hatreds, jealousies, and historic disputes are now being played out in new lands.

The conclusions of the European monitoring centre's *Summary overview of the situation in the European Union 2001-2005* only reinforce this conclusion:

There has been some evidence to support the view that there is some link between the number of reported anti-Semitic incidents and the political situation in the Middle East.... Moreover, some of the data indicate that there have been changes in the profile of the perpetrators. It is no longer the extreme right which is seen as solely responsible for hostility towards Jewish individuals or property.... Instead, victims identified “young Muslims,” “people of North African origin,” or “immigrants” as perpetrators.

The EUMC concluded that in Europe:

Anti-Semitic activity after 2000 is increasingly attributed to a “new anti-Semitism,” characterized primarily by the vilification of Israel as the “Jewish collective” and perpetrated primarily by members of Europe's Muslim population.

Throughout the Middle East and in many Muslim communities in western Europe and beyond, anti-Zionist rhetoric finds frequent and powerful expression, especially in Arab-language newspapers and magazines, on the radio, on television, via the Internet, and in sermons delivered in mosques.

Anti-Semitism emanating from Muslim communities throughout Europe provides a corrosive atmosphere for Jews there and provides for an expanding hotbed of anti-Jewish feelings, attitudes, and actions.

● (1310)

In an area so historically and tragically associated with anti-Semitism, for this virus to return in yet another guise is both infuriating and extremely worrying. History, as well as common decency, dictates that European authorities as well as individual Europeans have a distinct responsibility to curb this evil before it is allowed to again overwhelm the Jewish people, and worse, spread to other lands. We must not veer our eyes as Jews elsewhere suffer from anti-Semitism, ignoring the problem since it fails to rise to such a threatening level around us.

Before I close, I wish to provide a few recommendations toward this end.

First, I recommend that this committee pursue the creation of a post of special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism, similar to the post I held. When I held this position in the United States, I had very few international compatriots with whom to speak, and it would benefit this country greatly.

Second, require your foreign ministry to publish an annual report on anti-Semitism, assembled by your embassies overseas. They are on the ground. They are talking with people every day, and they are the best place of all to see what's happening in these countries.

And third, require the government to assemble annual reports on acts of anti-Semitism occurring in this country. In this way you will have a base of data from which to work. Otherwise you can't define the problem if you don't know the numerical statistic behind it.

In conclusion, ignoring this problem is an abandonment of the Jews there, in Europe, and another scar upon the history of Jews and of freedom and goodwill itself. As Edmund Burke has said to have declared, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." It is certainly time to do something.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Dr. Charles Small.

Dr. Charles Small (Director, Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism (YIISA), Yale University): Thank you.

It's a great honour to be here with you. I want to say for the record that when I was at the London conference in February, I was very proud, as a person who is from Montreal, to be at the conference and to see there the all-party participation of the Canadian members of Parliament. I was very proud to see this participation. So I would like to commend the MPs here for participating in this conference and for really being leaders in the global community on this issue and taking up this inquiry.

I would like to start with a story. In the last academic year, Elie Wiesel came to Yale Law School to give a talk when he was being honoured. It was a packed room, with standing room only. They had an overflow room with a video hookup because so many students and faculty came to the lecture. There were about 700 people there, including some of the finest students—the future leaders of the United States—and law faculty in the country.

Elie Wiesel spoke about the possibility of another genocide against the Jewish people in talking about the destruction of the State of Israel. Elie Wiesel had family in Montreal. I would see him speak at synagogues regularly as I was growing up and coming of age, and to see Elie Wiesel, who is not only a symbol of the Shoah, but also, I think, a symbol of somebody who has fought for human rights from South Africa to Cambodia to Darfur to Sarajevo—the list goes on—to see him in his lifetime, this symbol of that generation, speak about the possibility of another genocide against the Jewish people, I thought was one of the most pathetic things I've ever seen in my life. Elie Wiesel spoke about this. What was even more devastating was that he went on to say that the thing that really disturbs him, as if this wasn't enough, is the fact that there's a silence. He asked where are the students and the student leaders, where are the faculty, and where are the leaders of the Jewish community and the leaders of the free world in the face of this clearly articulated, clearly stated, very open, very honest—and I'm using my words carefully—genocidal anti-Semitic movement that is sweeping parts of the world and that is infiltrating organizations and institutions even in the western world? We're met, by and large, with a silence. So I hope this committee and inquiry will become a beacon of light and stop the silence that is still prevalent mainly in the western world.

I would like to start by saying, just very briefly, that there are several stages of anti-Semitism historically. There was a sort of

religious and theological form of anti-Semitism. When people viewed the world through the lens of religion, when religion was dominant, the Jews were the wrong religion. When religion was replaced by notions of race, ethnicity, and national identity, the Jews were the wrong race, ethnicity, and nationality; they actually became foreigners in lands they had inhabited for many generations.

Now we're entering a new phase. If I could make one strong point to the committee, I think it's very important to realize that the world has changed and anti-Semitism has changed. We're no longer fighting the anti-Semitism of the brownshirts, Nazis, and fascism of 60 or 70 years ago. We have to now focus on a new and emerging type of anti-Semitism.

This new type of anti-Semitism, I would argue, is a globalized form of anti-Semitism. On the one hand, we have the dispossessed in parts of the Middle East who are being sucked into a sort of vacuum of radical Islamicists. I'm not speaking about Islam and I'm not speaking about Muslims; I want to make this point very clear. I'm speaking about political Islam. The doctrine of political Islam has at its core a form of genocidal anti-Semitism that the social movement is using almost in the classic sense, blaming the Jews for all sorts of ills, which Professor Cotler mentioned earlier, while they subjugate and take away basic human rights from their own populations. As Professor Cotler said, anti-Semitism begins with Jews, but it never ends with Jews.

If you look at Iranian society, it's a clear case in point. While they blame the Jews for every imaginable ill in the world that you can think of, they're taking away women's basic human rights; women are worth literally 50% of a man under law and under the judicial system in Iran. As well, gay people are being executed, and the Baha'i community is being totally stripped of its basic human rights while they focus attention on Israel and the Jews.

• (1315)

It's an amalgamation of this. You have a reactionary, radical, and political Islam on the one hand, and in Europe and North America to an extent, but mostly in western Europe, as Gregg Rickman was saying, you have almost an acquiescence. You have Europe emerging out of the Second World War with the destruction that was rampant throughout Europe, which was blamed, rightfully so I think, for the excesses of nationalism that Europeans suffered from, and now the intellectual world has entered into this phase of postmodernism. It's postmodernism combined with a liberalism, I think. They are very weary of national identities. They speak of notions of hybridity, of European identity more than specifically, say, English, Scottish, or French identity.

I think once again that Israel, with a strong national identity, and the Jewish people in Europe and North America, with a strong attachment to this State of Israel for cultural, religious, political, and historical reasons—and the list goes on—sort of fly in the face of the emerging postmodern European model of integration and multiculturalism, which I think is quite different from the Canadian model.

So you have in a sense, I would argue, an acquiescence to a social movement that is diametrically opposed to the basic human rights and human values that are embedded in democracy. If you think of notions of citizenship, under western democratic principles in Canada, for example, everybody ought to be equal under one legal system. In radical Islamic notions of caliphates and what they want to replace democratic states with, you have different levels of citizenship. So Jews in a sense wouldn't have the right to self-determination in the Middle East. Women would be second-class citizens. Gay people would be essentially eliminated. So the notion of citizenship is replaced with another type of citizenship. I think this is very important.

When we look at Iran, it is, as we know, intent on building a nuclear weapon. I was recently at a conference organized by Pugwash, which actually has its roots in Canada. There were scholars, physicists, and security people from Russia, China, all over the European Union, Canada, the United States, and Israel. Everybody at the table agreed that Iran is trying to build a nuclear weapon. There was no debate. The only debate was about how long it would take and whether, if Iran had the weapon, it would use it. But everybody agreed that Iran was trying to build a bomb.

I think it's very important to realize that Iran has consistently and openly and in an upfront way spoken about destroying the State of Israel. They are clear about it. If you read the writings of Ayatollah Khomeini and those of the present regime and the present supreme leader, they are clear and consistent about their wish to destroy the State of Israel. I think what's very important from a radical Islamic perspective is that the Jewish people are the only others to have self-determination on what is perceived as Islamic land and that would become part of this Islamic caliphate. This is why, I would argue, there is such a determined focus on Israel. According to radical Islamic thought, you can't have the other with self-determination, with governance over land; they have to be subjected to second-class citizenship.

If you look at Shiite Islam, there were fatwas passed mainly in the 1600s and 1700s. Two very well-known scholars, David Menashri and Daniel Tsadik, look at how Shiite Islam had fatwas in which Jews were considered untouchable or impure. To this day, Jews cannot go out in Iran in the rain because they are impure. Fatwas have been set that say if a Jew is out in the rain and their clothes become permeated with water and the water drips onto the pavement—and this is a religious ruling—you have to dig up the pavement and dispose of it because it's contaminated by the impurity of the Jew.

So you have a fusion, if you will, of the old pernicious forms of Shiite Persian anti-Semitism or Judeophobia combined with the geopolitical discourse of the social movement of radical Islam and the demonization of Israel. The demonization of Israel is at the core of the new anti-Semitism.

• (1320)

In the Hamas charter, the Hamas charter supported by Iran, it's not the rantings and ravings of a few extremists within the Hamas party or the military extreme wing of the party. This is the covenant. This is the covenant, the constitution, the *raison d'être* of Hamas.

Literally, they call not only for the killing of Jews, in black and white, in their covenant, in their constitution, but they also fuse...

If it weren't so serious, it would almost be as comical as a Monty Python skit on some level. Here is a radical Islamic organization that is trying to recreate some sort of fictitious golden age and replace Israel and Crusader Christian and Jewish influence on the region, to rid it of these outside influences, and recreate a purely Muslim Islamic reality, recreating the golden age. They actually use the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", the pernicious form of European anti-Semitism, and fuse it throughout its constitution. The theme that runs through the covenant of Hamas, which is right here, is the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion". It's unbelievable.

Here, as we heard from Professor Cotler, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" is becoming rampant once again. I would argue—I can show you details during the questions and answers—that the Iranian revolutionary regime, Hamas, Hezbollah, and other radical Islamists are using the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" to spread not only the dehumanization of the State of Israel but also classical forms of anti-Semitism.

When the deputy foreign minister of South Africa stood up about a year ago in Soweto and gave a speech about how the Jews were controlling the economy of the United States, 18,000 people, probably most of whom had had no direct contact with Jews in their lives, gave her a long standing ovation.

A young woman in Connecticut was shot dead at point-blank range in a café several months ago by a man who was stalking her who had a copy of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" in his knapsack.

I was at the Durban II conference when President Ahmadinejad spoke in Geneva. You can see that the themes of his language, of his whole speech, regarding Jews and the State of Israel were based on the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion". On the one hand, while they're trying to build weapons of mass destruction, and the west by and large continues to deal with them in terms of business as usual, European Union, German, and other countries' trade actually continues to increase with the regime. Despite its genocidal anti-Semitism, its sexism, its homophobia, and now the stealing of an election and persecuting its own citizens, this continues.

The exporting of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" is even more dangerous, probably, than their nuclear weapons program. We know that the Holocaust, the crematoriums, the bricks and mortars that built the crematoriums, began with ideas, began with words. The "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" paved the way to the crematoriums. It was created as a forgery in the late 1800s in France, or perhaps in Russia. These words and these concepts actually paved the way for the genocidal anti-Semitism that swept Europe.

As we know from the European experience, yes, six million Jews were liquidated in a horrific fashion. But look at the death and destruction that other people in Europe suffered too: tens of millions of other people died. Economies were totally destroyed.

So the disease of anti-Semitism, which is being unleashed openly and overtly in the Middle East, and is now, as we've heard from the other testimony, seeping into western European political discourse, intellectual discourse, and human rights discourse, is extraordinarily dangerous, I think, not just to the Jews and Israel but to the very basic notions of democratic principles that I'm sure everybody here, regardless of our political views, agrees on.

• (1325)

The Chair: Thank you, Dr. Small.

We have about 35 minutes for questions and answers. We'll try to be brief with the questions and also the answers.

We'll start off with Anita Neville.

Hon. Anita Neville: Thank you.

By default, I seem to be the only one left here for a short while.

Dr. Rickman, I want to follow up on your rather grim analysis of what's happening with European countries. Are we to assume that the portrait you're painting of what's happening in Europe will find its way here?

Dr. Gregg Rickman: I certainly hope it doesn't find its way here.

I think that in Europe there is a reluctance to challenge misbehaviour because of the existence of Islamophobia, which is present but not in the form that the greater Muslim society and its representatives would like to portray.

It's my experience that when actions are taken against the perpetrators, there is, at times, a violent reaction. People are afraid to go in and do something, because of threats, sometimes in reaction to law enforcement actions or because of outward protests and actions on the part of that society. That is coupled with the fact that those governments sometimes think that Jews can take care of themselves, that they're complaining, that they're making it more than what it is. And the governments sometimes think there's this mystical world. Even if it's not to the extent of the "Protocols" issue, they think there's this support structure behind the Jewish community, and therefore they believe the Jewish community can take care of itself, that it's just trying to either cover itself or cover the actions of Israel or that it's exaggerating.

I think the situation in Europe is different from the one here. It's a question of law enforcement. It's a question of vigilance. When someone says something, it must be immediately countered and debunked, no matter how ridiculous it is. When I said "law enforcement", I mean enforce the laws that are on the books. I spent three years telling this to every country I went to—to allies, enemies, whomever.

Hon. Anita Neville: Thank you.

Dr. Small, I understand that you and your colleague, Dr. Kaplan, have done a study that links anti-Israel sentiment in Europe with anti-Semitism. Have you done that for North America? If not, can you extrapolate from your findings there to comment on the situation in North America?

• (1330)

Dr. Charles Small: Thank you.

We did a study. We interviewed 5,000 people in 10 European countries using a questionnaire, so 500 in each of 10 European countries. The survey asked them questions about notions of classical forms of anti-Semitism and about Jewish business practices, and we measured the level of anti-Semitism in each society. Then we asked them a series of questions about Israel, whether the Israeli defence forces purposely shoot at children, the extreme pronouncements that demonize Israel. What we found was staggering. The levels of anti-Semitism were a little bit lower than we imagined, and the levels of anti-Israel sentiment were actually lower than we anticipated. But what was amazing was that those in society who harbour what we called "Israel-bashing views", extreme views on Israel, were 56% more likely or 13 times more likely to be anti-Semitic in the classical sense.

People who are extremely anti-Israel are 56% more likely or 13 times more likely to be anti-Semitic in the classical sense. In terms of mathematical modelling, the numbers are off the chart. If something in the pharmacy was 56% more likely to cause cancer, the government would remove it from the shelves immediately.

It was, I think, a very powerful study, in terms of statistical analysis, and it confirmed what everybody feels in their gut. So when you see these demonstrations or pronouncements against Israel, it's fair to say that not everybody who demonstrates against Israel is anti-Semitic or that anyone who criticizes Israel is anti-Semitic, but people who hold extreme views of Israel are much more likely to be anti-Semitic in the classical sense.

I believe those findings in Europe are certainly applicable to North America.

Hon. Anita Neville: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Lois Brown.

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

It's frightening to hear some of the things you've talked about today, and North America is not immune to any of this. We've seen some of these things go on.

I guess my question is a little bit more of a practical one. As a parliamentarian, I have a responsibility to view what's going on in my own constituency. My constituency is just north of Toronto. It's growing exponentially. We have a new synagogue, which is not large, in the area. We also now have a mosque, which again is not large, but it's a growing community.

Do you have recommendations as to how I, as a parliamentarian, can engage groups in my own constituency and help?

One of the things you said, Dr. Rickman, was that they're finding that Muslim youth are not staying in school. This creates its own problems, which become cyclical, I'm sure, within these communities. How do we go about ensuring that young people stay in school? Do we enforce that through legislation? Is that practical? Are there ways we can engage these young people to ensure that they have a bright future? Do you have some practical recommendations? I ask that of all three.

Dr. Gregg Rickman: This is a very tough question. To get to the point about what I witnessed and talked about at great length in Europe, when these kids, these youth, would fall out of the societal structure, they would fall prey to very charismatic people—imams and other religious leaders—not all of whom would steer them badly. I don't want to make it sound as though every single one of them fell into this orbit, but those who did were proselytizing, taking vulnerable kids and proselytizing them to the point of doing these things. Kids are like sponges; they absorb everything. If you teach them good, they'll absorb that good. If you teach them bad, they'll absorb that too.

It's interesting. That sort of mirrors prisons in Europe. It happens in North America, too. In the United States there are a lot of Muslim imams, and stories are beginning to come out—it happens more in Europe—about proselytizing. So you take people who are criminal. They're vulnerable, but they come out already disadvantaged. They go into prison; they fall prey to this, and then they go back out, and it's almost intensified.

If you talk about education, it's conveying to them, to kids, a sort of national spirit. It's the idea that you get out of society what you put into it, but that you are a part of this society, that you're not on the outer fringes, that you're not being preyed upon, that you're not being judged as being part of “the other”, as Charles has discussed, but that you're part of us, and that you have a stake in this society. If they don't believe they have a stake in this society or any other society, they're going to go looking for something. That's the theory behind gangs. It's the theory behind crime. It's everything. They have to have a stake. They have to be a stakeholder in this country and in their society. They have to know they can succeed and set the example of doing well, as opposed to succeeding by doing bad things, to set the other example.

• (1335)

Ms. Lois Brown: Thank you.

Are there any comments from Mr. Cotler?

Hon. Irwin Cotler: During the time when I was Minister of Justice and I was going around this country, I was struck by the fact that when I would meet with, let's say, members of the Jewish community, they were particularly concerned about being targets of terrorism. There was cause for that concern. When I would meet with Muslim communities, I found that they were particularly concerned that they were being singled out or profiled with respect to the struggle against terrorism.

As I went about this country, then, I saw concerns in both those communities. That's why we set up a council of national security at the time. It was composed of distinguished Canadians across this country, but with representatives from the Jewish community and the Muslim community so that they could engage in that kind of discourse about each other's fears.

I've tried to replicate that in my own riding, which has both a large Jewish presence and the fourth-largest Muslim presence in Quebec, not only in terms of bringing the communities together for some form of dialogue to understand each other's fears, but also to speak about, to both Jews and Muslims, some of the things I've spoken of today. As I say, when I do that, I say the same thing in a mosque that

I say in a synagogue. If we are speaking truths, then they need to be told wherever we are.

Another thing that I think we could use to advantage is the London Declaration to combat anti-Semitism, precisely because it was adopted by 125 parliamentarians from over 40 countries, and it included Muslim countries among them. It is a template document that we can use and disseminate and in fact hold town halls around in our own communities. That's another possibility in that regard.

Ms. Lois Brown: Dr. Small.

Dr. Charles Small: Your question is I think a profound question. I don't really have the answer for it at all. But I would suggest that Canada stands for very strong notions of democracy. In the charter, we're very clear on issues of human rights and protection under the law, and also in the policies of multiculturalism.

I would urge you, on that basis, to go into communities and dialogue with your constituents and develop networks of people who could reach out to each other. I think it's very important to have dialogue at a local level as well as a national level.

I would urge members of Parliament and people concerned about education and basic human rights to really begin to understand the language of radical Islam, because it's here. It's in Canada. It is, I'm sure, a small minority, but it is prevalent. If kids, young people, are listening to this message of hate—of hating Jews, of subjugating women, of justifying the killing of gay people—then....

When Ahmadinejad came to Columbia University, for example, he spoke in front of the most educated faculty and students from the Middle East studies department program. He said there were no gay people in Iran, and everybody laughed. But actually it was a very scary and very serious statement. Basically, if you're discovered to be gay in Iran, you're executed. So there are no gay people in Iran, and it's not a laughing matter.

I think we really have to understand the language of the Iranian revolutionary regime and how this ideology is being exported by Iran and by others into our communities. We have to be aware of what these young people are listening to, and combat this with Canadian notions of democracy, respect for the other, and human rights.

Ms. Lois Brown: Thank you.

• (1340)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Tim Uppal.

Mr. Tim Uppal (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My first question is for Mr. Cotler.

I think you'd just be the perfect person to answer this question, with your seniority and with the fact that you're part of this panel.

When we started this up and we sent out the media release on this panel, this inquiry, I got some e-mails asking why anti-Semitism? Why not racism? Why not open it up to all racism?

What is your answer on that?

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Well, number one, I think we have had hearings on racism. I've been party to that, whether it was through the justice and human rights committee and/or otherwise. But this raises the question of why a specific one with respect to anti-Semitism as a species of racism, and I think there are a number of considerations that warrant that type of specific inquiry.

First, we're dealing with the oldest and most enduring of hatreds, which has taken different mutations over time. But this longest and most enduring of hatreds has ended up causing catastrophic suffering, not only for Jews, but for all those who get enveloped in that virus of anti-Semitism, which, as I said, has had mutations over time.

The second thing is that it is the only form of racism today or the only form of hatred today that I would say is of a global dimension. In other words, what we're witnessing today, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, is not only a new, escalating, and virulent anti-Semitism, but also a global anti-Semitism. There is no other vulnerable minority that can say they are the target globally of a racist virus, and where that virus also, by way of extension, as the London Declaration has put it, not only propagates hatred against Jews, but propagates hatred against Israel as being the Jew among the nations, or the collective Jewish entity, so that you have only one state in the entire community that itself is the standing target of state sanction and incitement to genocide.

This leads me to a third feature: that the species of racism known as anti-Semitism is also distinguishable by the fact that it is the expression and manifestation of a state-sanctioned, state-orchestrated character of incitement. You don't find this in such a persistent, pervasive, and pernicious way with respect to other forms of racism in the manner in which this virus is, as I say, state-sanctioned and state-orchestrated, of which the epicentre is Ahmadinejad's Iran, but it's not limited to that.

The fourth is that there is no other racism that marches, as I've said, under the protective cover of the United Nations, under the banner of human rights, and under the struggle against racism itself. What makes this so sophisticated, and frankly what makes it so dangerous and insidious, is that it uses the language of human rights, it uses the imprimatur of international law, and it invokes the protective cover of the United Nations in order to carry out its species of hatred. You can look at all the deliberations.... Take one example. At the United Nations Human Rights Council, you don't find any other state in the world that is targeted for differential and discriminatory treatment as is the State of Israel. Nor will you find in the discourse of any other body even anti-Semitic expression as you will find in the deliberations of the United Nations.

I've just given you about four examples, but I think those four examples identify in a distinguishable fashion why we are focusing on this particular form of hatred, though we are not excluding the others. But to conclude on this, I would say that as we've learned tragically only too well, while it begins with Jews, it doesn't end with Jews, and Jew hatred ends up engaging other hatreds as well.

• (1345)

The Chair: Dr. Small.

Dr. Charles Small: Thank you.

To respond to your question, I think it's a very important question. I did my research before this on issues of racism. That was my focus, the notion of race and the other. In my doctoral thesis at Oxford, I looked at Canada and Canadian socio-cultural policies historically.

What's fascinating to me is that in the literature on race and ethnic relations and on cultural studies, anti-Semitism is basically a void. It's not really there. Anti-Semitism is somehow relegated to Holocaust studies and Jewish studies. I would argue that anti-Semitism isn't a Jewish topic or area of analysis, actually, but that anti-Semitism is a problem for those who are the perpetrators of the hatred.

I started this research centre at Yale University. We opened three years ago. We had the idea five years ago to start it. I kept searching for a research centre on anti-Semitism at a North American university and I couldn't find one. I thought there was something wrong with my research techniques, but we actually became the first and only North American university research centre looking at anti-Semitism.

Even in the literature there's a void. You can make the argument—I would make the argument—that in the last 20 or 30 years, roughly, there has been progress within academia on issues of race and ethnic relations as an area of study. Gender studies has been growing as an area of research. However, I would say there's really a shortage of research looking at issues of contemporary anti-Semitism. As Professor Cotler said, it's a global phenomenon. It's genocidal.

I had a series of quotes, though I don't want to speak for too long. For example, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, said two years ago, and I quote directly, "There is only one solution to the Middle East problem, namely, the annihilation and destruction of the Jewish state." The terms "Jewish", "Zionist", and "Israel" are used interchangeably, and it is genocidal. I think as scholars and decision-makers we really have to understand this phenomenon. At one level, the contemporary forms have been ignored. There are Holocaust studies, yes, but what's happening today, what's going on and the implications of it are I think not really grasped.

Mr. Tim Uppal: Just one second. I know you want to jump into this. I'll let you do that, too, and after, you can answer that.

You mentioned about Muslim youth needing to feel that they belong to Canadian society, or U.K. society, or U.S. society. Are you aware of efforts in other countries to make this happen? Are governments helping out in some way to help that along, and do you know how it's going?

Dr. Gregg Rickman: Before I comment on that, I wanted to add just one other statement about this. When I was at the State Department, the idea of treating anti-Semitism as though it were just racism was brought up a lot. In Europe, there's a tendency to treat anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Christianity—there's probably no really good word for that—holistically, as they call it, as if one pill, one aspirin, could cure it all. However, if one of them is a cancer, namely, anti-Semitism, aspirin is going to make you feel good for 20 minutes and then you're going to recede. Anti-Semitism is a wholly different animal. It is so different from racism in a general sense that it has to stand alone.

In answer to your question about whether there are programs to give Muslim youth a sense of belonging, there are efforts under way in a lot of countries. There are a lot of interfaith efforts. As I said, it all gets at the point of making these kids feel as though they have a stake in their society. If they don't, whether we're talking about Muslim youth or any other youth, they're going to fall prey to something else because of the longing they have, and that something could be gangs or anything.

Efforts are under way. I won't identify who it was, but I told you about someone in France who was trying to go into these communities on the outskirts of Paris. In some cases he was told that, "Yes, I want to be able to learn. I want to succeed." Some of the elders there want their kids to succeed, but they fall prey to these bad influences. Some of these kids come back with the lines, "If you don't convert, I have to kill you." This is pernicious stuff. It's awful.

• (1350)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Scott Reid wanted to ask a few questions.

Mr. Scott Reid: Yes. The first one is really more of a thought, but I'll throw it out as a question.

For one of the thoughts that strikes me, I guess I'm addressing Dr. Rickman.

In your latest comment, it strikes me that one obvious difference when we summarize anti-Christian sentiment or anti-Muslim sentiment versus anti-Jewish sentiment is that there is strength in numbers. There are, roughly speaking, a billion Muslims in the world. I'm not sure how many Christians there are in the world, but certainly more than a billion. And there are 15 million Jews, a number that is a little larger than that of the population of the province of Ontario.

I think that causes a certain amount of self-restraint to be applied to those who might otherwise be inclined to be more radical, perhaps, in their opposition. One thinks twice before taking on a billion people, but all things considered, the Jews are a small group. Is this perhaps part of the reason—or am I just imagining that it's part of the reason—why it is so aggressively anti-Jewish? I suppose I'm thinking primarily here of the Islamist militancy, which I assume under other circumstances treats the Christians and Jews very similarly.

Dr. Gregg Rickman: You're asking a question that people have probably been asking themselves since the Greeks. Anti-Semitism has been around at least that long.

I wish I had the quote with me, but in the thirties, Albert Einstein made a comment about Jews on one hand being told that they were living on the outskirts of society, and then on the other hand being told they were trying to control society, and that they deal only among themselves on financial matters and yet, opposite to that, they try to control the world economy.

If you are asking me if there is a word for why there is anti-Semitism, I think it's jealousy. I don't say that in a proud way or in a way to say that Jews do fantastic things, but it seems to be the reference point that everyone falls back upon when it comes to blame. As Professor Cotler has said, if it's not spreading AIDS or the

swine flu now, a thousand years ago it was poisoning wells. A thousand years ago, it was killing Christian children to make pastries.

As I have told some of you, I heard a story from a Saudi professor several years ago who said that she had a friend—it was her, but she said she had a friend—who wanted to know if Jews make their pastries with blood. At the time I was a representative of the U.S. government and I couldn't come out and say something outlandish or crazy, but I had to spend a few minutes telling her why this just doesn't happen.

People have commented that this stuff is so ingrained in people's minds that it's passed on culturally. I have a friend who I heard this story from only a couple of days ago. My friend's relative was in Moscow this summer and went to the Moscow circus. There was a clown dressed up as a rabbi. Then they brought out two monkeys. One monkey was dressed as a groom, one monkey was dressed as a bride, and the clown proceeded to marry the two monkeys. They made a whole big deal about that. With the people who were sitting next to the relative of this friend, there was a child, who said, "Mommy, what are they doing and what are the monkeys?" The mother said, "Oh, they're kikes." That's a derogatory term for Jews.

I was sitting back in the audience in the first session and listening to Professor Cotler. The only thing that comes to mind when you think of this is that it's ignorance. It's hateful, purposeful evil spread by people for the purpose of doing harm against 15 million people. The joke I always used to use was that if Jews did truly control the world, wouldn't the first thing they'd try to outlaw be anti-Semitism?

I wish I had the full answer.

• (1355)

Mr. Scott Reid: I did have one more thing, if I may, on the term "anti-Semitism" itself.

Again, Dr. Rickman, you emphasized very strongly that when the term "anti-Semitism" is used properly, it refers to bias, hatred, against Jews. I note that in a number of the submissions we've received there's an effort to appropriate, presumably, the power associated with the term "anti-Semitism" and apply it in other ways to argue that anti-Semitism, if understood properly, and I guess in what is being asserted as its platonic sense, is referring to hatred and discrimination against Semites.

You get this kind of thing. I'll quote from a really quite extraordinary presentation that was given to us by a guy named Jim Allan, who says:

Israel, supported mainly by the United States, is breaking just about every international requirement designed for peace in the world, thus jeopardizing peace.

Condemnation of Israel is often branded as anti-Semitic. The contrary is the case. It is predominately [sic] non-Semitic Israel itself—

He gives an explanation as to why most people who call themselves Jews in Israel are not real Semites. It continues:

—that is practicing anti-Semitism against the predominately [sic] Semitic Palestinians.

Another presentation, which was put in by someone who I suspect is cognizant of this problem, argues, "The term anti-Semitism is old-fashioned and inaccurate; "semitite" is as silly a word as "Aryan". This suggested to me that the person making that submission was arguing that maybe it's a good idea to try to break free of this whole attempt to appropriate the power associated with this term that goes back to a previous era.

I just wondered if I could have your comment on that.

Dr. Gregg Rickman: Yes. Anti-Semitism, in my belief, is an incorrect term for a number of reasons, but mainly because it's a linguistic term. It's based on the Semitic language. Arabic and Hebrew do have, obviously, a common root and many similarities, but in that sense, the proper term is or should be "anti-Judaism" or "Judaophobe", or whatever kind of new creation you want to use.

Towards that end, from my presentation, I want to repeat a statement that I was told specifically in southern France: "Arabs are Semites and therefore, 'Islamaphobia' is a kind of anti-Semitism." That is a secessionist type of statement; that is a purposeful effort to steal the historic victimization away from Jews and to cast it into the Muslim sphere.

If you couple that with the idea that the next holocaust is coming, which many Muslims in Europe and Muslim intellectuals are writing.... You have to do nothing more than a Google check to find stories like this where they say that "Islamophobia is so bad that we are the next victims of the holocaust." It is a purposeful misuse of language to turn it on its head. In conjunction with what Professor Cotler said, attaching that to the use of the term "racism" and then using the UN to advance these notions is an effort, a real systematic, thought out, too clever by half effort that is being pursued.

I can say that we saw this sort of effort used in a lot of different international fora, with condemnations of Islamophobia and trying to quell criticism of Islam through that mechanism, and in terms, as Charles has said, to outlaw certain things, to change things. What he was saying was about sexist acts and things like that, but it's the clever use of language to quell dissent, to change the context and the role of the world and the focus on a problem that they are both creating and trying to say they are suffering from.

• (1400)

The Chair: Thank you.

We have about two minutes, if Dr. Charles Small can finish it off.

Dr. Charles Small: I will respond to the questions, and they're very important questions.

The term "anti-Semitism" was actually coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr, who was himself a hater of Jews. He coined the term, and it is a problematic term. In the social sciences we know

race and ethnicity are social constructions; they're not absolute terms or biologically determined terms. At one level there is no such thing as a Semitic race and that sort of thing.

The term, as problematic as it is, has been used to describe, for some 120-odd years, hatred against Jews. It's an imperfect scientific term, but it's clear in its meaning. Other terms are more appropriate at some conceptual level—Judaophobia or that sort of thing. I think anti-Semitism clearly refers to the hatred of Jews.

To go back to your first question to Gregg Rickman, I think anti-Semitism is sort of like an onion. You can peel off layer after layer. It's such a complex phenomenon that after many years of studying it, to tell you the truth, I don't completely grasp it. You can grasp it and at the same time you lose it. It's theological. Christianity was supposed to replace Judaism. The Jews committed deicide. Islam has a deicide narrative as well against the Jews, saying that the Jews poisoned Mohammed, which is becoming popular. There's a racial dynamic. There's a national dynamic. The connection between Israel and anti-Semitism is becoming more and more powerful. You read some quotes from this Mr. Allen who said that Jews are really white and not Semitic, that Jews are not of the pure Aryan race and have to be exterminated, and that, when it suits the purposes, they are the white race that are imperialists colonizing land. So the references shift like sand, and that's very dangerous.

There's one incident that points to the irrationality of anti-Semitism. I was in Australia recently, in Melbourne, a few months after the Gaza war. There was a feminist organization made up mainly of middle-aged Anglo-Saxon Australians. Two thousand women, feminists, were marching down the street screaming or chanting, "We are Hamas." You would think that western liberal feminists who are concerned about human rights would be appalled at what Hamas has in store for women. Yet, when it comes to Jews, Israel, and Zionism, it becomes an irrational notion. It's very important to study, and your task is great.

The Chair: I want to thank the witnesses for an excellent presentation today.

I want to also apologize. Some members do have to leave for the House. In fact, Dr. Hedy Fry mentioned she had to leave because she's speaking in the House. That's the reason people came in and out.

It's been really excellent. I want to thank you.

Our next hearing is going to be on Monday, November 16, in Room 269 of the West Block between 11 and 2 o'clock.

Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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