July 21, 2021

National Summit on Antisemitism

Greetings at 12:10 p.m. (by the following):

Peter Flegel, Executive Director, Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat, Bardish Chagger, Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Marc Gold (Senator, Quebec), Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, Karina Gould, Minister of International Development.

The Honorable Irwin Cotler (Canada's Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism) gave an address.

Roundtable Discussion at 12:30 pm

Presentation by community leaders 12:48

Presentation of issues facing Jewish communities across Canada and proposed solutions:

- Calls for action- strengthening and enhancing our already preexisting laws, better prevention, and enhancement of security and border personnel.
- Antisemitism is a form of racism and we must do better for our Israeli friends and the wonderful Jewish communities.
- Speaker representing the Ethiopian Jewish Community of Canada stated they are under constant scrutiny and the discourse leaves them with a visceral problem. These people are oppressed for being black; being Jewish and many young Jews of color are constantly experiencing this.
- Stated that we need to continue and promote the IRAH recommendation. We need to develop appropriate legislation that will enhance more appropriate and progressive language and take on a greater leadership role.

Government Responses:

- Thus far, Bernie (Huron, Canadian Nationalist Party) is the only one to push an anti-Semitism agenda.
- Suggestion was made of more Hate Crime Units being developed.
- Online hate has become so harmful that it needs to be addressed. Majority of hate crimes are generated through racialized online hate. Harris Black stated "we answered a call from the Jewish Community. There were physical threats that came out of the internet harm. In Montreal, they threatened to hit the Jewish Community by driving into them and harming children.
- Community Security Trust – a program looking for government funding uses volunteers to help be the eyes and ears of the Jewish Community. ED of National Jewish Council, Parliamentary Secretaries and Municipal leaders are supportive of this advocacy.

Responses by Elected Officials:

- Mayor of Vaughan, Ontario (Maurizio Bevilacqua) spoke about Hate Crimes.
- Chief of Police - if you are an elected official you must commit to all forms of Human Rights Acts. We must report the hate crime, it is incredibly important for it to be reported to the police. If the police aren't trusted by you, please use a community advocate leader.
- Needed: Tactics that are successful in reporting hate crimes, establishing a uniform definition of what would constitute a crime to be a hate crime. Doing this will encourage higher reporting levels (as some people are not even sure what is considered a hate crime). A Hate Crime Unit was established in 2016, in Montreal, and it has made a world of a difference and is something to highly consider in your city if it doesn't exist as of yet.

Facilitated Discussion with all attendees

Open Discussion: Building Vibrant Communities

Participants discussed ideas, recommendations and best ways to implement relevant programs and policies to fill gaps in legislation. Discussion included much of the same recommendations as requested by the Jewish community, as well as the government responses (above).

Lunch (this was an opportunity to listen in on municipal and community leaders discussing ideas about combating these crimes.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

This block of time allowed participants to provide their recommendations on best ways to not only implement programs and policies; but also ways to fill gaps in legislature and programs. During this discussion we were able to react and provide our feedback on recently announced proposals around this topic and the online hate as well. Discussion was fruitful and people agreed that each city should have a Hate Crime Unit within their police force.

Roundtable Discussion: Advancing National Education and Awareness.

- This was an opportunity for several Jewish communities to present issues that they are facing all throughout Canada. Several of the Jewish communities had some proposed solutions that they had developed.
- Adam Levy from Winnipeg Digital Literacy Campaign.
- Advisory Committee of Council.

This discussion was followed by elected officials responding to the need and to the solutions that were proposed.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

The final open discussion was regarding Intersecting Identities. Participants and elected officials were both able to provide recommendations on best ways to implement relevant programs and policies and ways to fill programmatic, policy and legislative gaps. This was an open discussion and all were in agreeance that we need to come up with better legislature surround antisemitism and hate crimes.

Closing:

Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth) and Irwin Cotler (Canada's Special Envoy for Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Anti-Semitism) made closing remarks at 6:50 pm.