



Report Number: PFC2019-1324

Meeting: PFC Meeting

Meeting Date: 2019 October 08

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

**RE: COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM IN THE CITY OF CALGARY**

**Sponsoring Councillors: Carra; Chahal; Chu; Colley-Urquhart; Davison; Demong; Farkas; Gondek; Jones; Keating; Magliocca; Sutherland; Woolley & Mayor Nenshi**

**WHEREAS:**

1. The Holocaust refers to the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and mass murder of approximately six million European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945;
2. Antisemitism and racial nationalism helped produce the Holocaust, in addition to the baseless hatred that contributed to the Nazis' persecution and mass murder of millions of others during this period, including Roma and Sinti peoples, people with physical and mental disabilities, religious minorities, political dissenters, homosexual people and Slavic-speaking people;
3. The remembrance of these past atrocities helps ensure that no similar event occurs in the future, and as such, the United Nations has declared January 27<sup>th</sup> to be International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the date which commemorates the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945;
4. Many governments world-wide have declared city-wide days of remembrance and education, including but not limited to:
  - In 2000, the Province of Alberta declared Yom HaShoah, the Day of the Holocaust as determined each year by the Jewish lunar calendar, to be Holocaust Memorial Day;
  - In 2018, the City of Windsor declared April 15<sup>th</sup> to be a city-wide Holocaust Remembrance Day; and
  - In 2019, the City of New York declared January 27<sup>th</sup> to be a city-wide Holocaust Remembrance Day and also conducts a city-wide Holocaust Education Week.
5. Current research shows that one in five Canadian youth are unaware of the events that occurred during the Holocaust, while 62% of Canadians aged 18-34 are unaware of how many Jews were killed during the Holocaust;
6. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism has been adopted by democratic countries and is a vital tool in countering the global rise in antisemitism by setting a strong example and offering a practical tool for authorities – from police, to school districts and campus officials – as they work to tackle antisemitism;
7. On June 25, 2019, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism officially announced as part of the Government of Canada's anti-racism strategy, adoption of the working definition of antisemitism (along with a list of illustrative examples) as:
  - a. **“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”**

8. Much of the work to protect and shield our community from racism, discrimination and antisemitism happens at the level of municipal government;
9. Statistics Canada reports that Jewish people are the most frequently targeted ethno-cultural group when it comes to police-reported hate crimes, with such crimes taking place once every 24 hours in Canada;
10. Antisemitism can only be overcome by education, increased awareness, strong political condemnation, and enforcement of relevant laws anchored in the IHRA definition as a clear means of identifying hatred toward Jews;
11. According to the 2011 civic census, over 8,000 people of Jewish faith currently reside in Calgary including Holocaust Survivors and families of Survivors; and
12. Research affirms that Holocaust education and awareness promotes empathy for the suffering of others, and demonstrates a willingness to intervene on their behalf when antisemitic and other acts of hatred occur; a greater openness to diverse perspectives, as well as honouring the memory of the millions who suffered and died during the Holocaust.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:**

1. The City of Calgary formally recognize, commemorate and proclaim January 27<sup>th</sup> as our annual city-wide International Holocaust Remembrance Day;
2. Administration explore the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) non-legally binding working definition of 'antisemitism' and make recommendations to Council.