



Canadian Church Leaders Speak Out Against Antisemitism

09.12.2003

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The leaders' statement also expresses "our unqualified gratitude for the gifts of the Jewish people to world civilization in general and Canadian society in particular," and adds: "We invite all our people, where the opportunity exists, to become acquainted with our Jewish brothers and sisters and with their places of worship, . . . celebrating all that we share with our Jewish friends and neighbours, and respecting our differences."

Issued in the form of a letter to the churches of Canada, the Jewish community in Canada, and all people of good will, the statement was released on December 8, 2003. In an immediate response, the Canadian Jewish Congress welcomed its issuance. Rabbi Reuven Bulka, chair of interreligious affairs for the Congress, stated: 'This warm, clear, and forceful declaration recognizes that Canada, unfortunately, has not been immune from a re-emergent global antisemitism. The expressed determination by Church signatories to systematically combat antisemitism across Canada in both word and deed is especially timely and resonates positively with all Canadians.' He added that "It is heartening to note that, in the context of a statement on antisemitism, there is also an appreciation of the Jewish community's significant contribution to Canada and an unequivocal affirmation of Judaism's vigor and inspirational power not only for its adherents but also for other believers.'

The signers of the letter include high officials of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Regional Synod of Canada of the Reformed Church in America, the Canada & Bermuda Territory of the Salvation Army, and the United Church of Canada.

From press releases and news reports