**Two excellent letters sent to President Cannon about the textbook:**

#1:

Dear President Cannon,

 I write this message to express my shock and dismay at the continued use of the textbook, “Culture of Prejudice,” as required reading for a sociology course, taught once again by Annette Tezli.

 I understood that this book had been removed from the course list, given its promulgation of absolute falsehoods that demonise the only democratic state in the Middle East and cannot understand why any university would insist that its students use a book whose text explicitly – and falsely – states that “Millions of Palestinians remain under military occupation, under constant surveillance and regular attack by Israeli forces, including tanks, fighter planes, and helicopter gunships. Their houses and land have been destroyed or expropriated and given to hundreds of thousands of armed settlers. Former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir simply dismissed their suffering by asserting that “Palestinians do not exist."

 Further, this book promotes pernicious lies which go unchecked by any form of balance, in that the author writes, “supernatural sanctions have been invoked by Israelis who violently dispossessed the population of Palestine. As Israel came to be defined as a Jewish state, promised to them long ago by a supernatural being, most of the Palestinian population was expelled" The author also trots out the nature of the ‘chosenness’ of the Jewish people, clearly misunderstanding it from both a theological and an historical perspective. As a theologian, I assure you that this ‘chosen’ aspect does not mean that Jews hold ourselves above others in a position of superiority, but rather, that because we understand ourselves in context as having been chosen by G-d to receive G-d’s covenant, we therefore have a greater responsibility to be, as our prayers tell us, ‘a holy people before G-d.’ This means, in fact, that we have to live up to responsibilities given to us by G-d, that we are expected to always act with integrity and honour, that we do not celebrate any culture of death. And we are expected and reminded to do this whether anybody is looking (or even cares) or not.

 Jews are the indigenous people of the Middle East – not only of the State of Israel. And Jews have been routinely driven from other countries in the Middle East, though this book does not attend to that fact. In 1948, the Jewish population of Iraq numbered almost 140,000 people; today it is estimated at 5. In Egypt, there were about 80,000 Jews; now there are estimated to be a hundred. In Yemen and Aden, there were about 63,000 Jews; now there are fewer than 500. In Syria, there were between 15,000 and 30,000 Jews; now, it’s estimated that there are a hundred. In Lebanon, there were between 5,000 and 20,000 Jews; now there are fewer than a hundred. In Iran, there were estimated to be about 65,000 Jews – today, there may be 10,000. Yet somehow, the University of Calgary permits the use of a book that accuses Jews of the genocide of a people whose population is growing year upon year.

 One doesn’t have to be religious at all to recognise the problem at hand. The book, whose use has caused problems before, is biased. It represents falsehood as fact, and its continued use creates a hostile climate for Jewish students and for non-Jews who believe in Israel’s right to exist. It troubles me not only because I am a Jew and resent the continued use of lies disguised as academic work, but because in any academic work I undertake myself, I am scrupulously clear about facts and sources. The authors of this book have an agenda, and it is one of bigotry and lies. I hope that the University of Calgary will do the right thing – immediately – and insist that this book be withdrawn from the course.

 Sincerely,  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#2

 "Dear President Cannon,

As an alumnus and former dean, I am most disturbed to hear that an irresponsible and inflammatory book continues to be the required text in a University of Calgary course.

Given the resurgence of antisemitism worldwide, including on North American streets and campuses, one would think that an introductory course on *Canadian* Society might find a suitable text that did NOT go out of its way to delegitimize Israel, stigmatize the Jewish people and feed its students a distorted and often demonstrably wrong version of history. You have heard the sound of one axe grinding -- and it is not scholarly. Even more troubling is that this text returned as the requirement after its inaccuracies and danger were exposed.

I do hope you won't cite "academic freedom" in defence of promoting antisemitism. We have been there before.

Sincerely, \_\_\_"