

From: Clerks@vaughan.ca
To: [Assunta Ferrante](mailto:Assunta.Ferrante)
Subject: FW: [External] Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions
Date: Monday, June 17, 2024 9:08:54 AM
Attachments: [Vaughan By-Law to Protect Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure June 18 2024.docx](#)

From: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 17, 2024 9:03 AM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca; Council@vaughan.ca
Cc: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions

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Hi.

I have already registered to speak at the Committee of the Whole (2) tomorrow June 18. Thank you for your invitation, as per the note below.

In addition to my speaking, I've attached a WORD copy of my talk which centres around the proposed "By-Law to Protect Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure."

As you can imagine, there's much to say. I've condensed my original, but it still takes 8-9 minutes to talk. I appreciate that the Committee will allow me that time.

Regards.

Martin (Mendy) Finkelstein
[REDACTED] Promenade Circle
Thornhill, On.
L4J 9A4
[REDACTED]

From: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2024 3:05 PM
To: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: FW: [External] Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions

From: mayor@vaughan.ca <mayor@vaughan.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 2:18 PM
To: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: [External] Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions

Good afternoon,

Thank you for previously contacting the Mayor's Office regarding your concerns about community safety.

We are happy to provide you with this important update.

During the May 22, 2024 Council meeting, Vaughan Council unanimously passed Mayor Del Duca's [Member's Resolution](#), which directs City staff to develop a by-law aimed at protecting Vaughan's places of worship, schools, childcare facilities, and hospital from protests that intimidate, or incite hatred, intolerance, and violence.

I am pleased to inform you that City staff have since developed the proposed by-law, which will be presented to City Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for June 18th, 2024.

To read the proposed by-law, [click here](#).

It would be very helpful if you would please consider sharing your opinion regarding this initiative with all Members of Council and our City Clerk.

To submit a written communication on the proposed by-law, please send an email to clerks@vaughan.ca and council@vaughan.ca. The deadline for submitting written communications is noon on June 17th, 2024.

If you'd like to make a deputation (which can be done in person or virtually) regarding the proposed by-law at the Committee of the Whole meeting, you can do so by pre-registering by completing the [online form here](#) or calling Service Vaughan at 905-832-2281. Deadline to register for a deputation is noon on June 17th, 2024.

Please let us know if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Thank you for your attention and participation in making Vaughan a safer, more inclusive community.

Best regards,

Office the Mayor, Steven Del Duca

From: Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 9, 2024 10:54 AM
To: Melissa Lantsman <melissa.lantsman@parl.gc.ca>
Cc: Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies <swcmain@fswc.ca>; mayor@vaughan.ca; Linda Jackson <Linda.Jackson@vaughan.ca>; Gila Martow <Gila.Martow@vaughan.ca>; laura.smith@pc.ola.org; Mendy Finkelstein [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions

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Dear Melissa.

After my short note here, please read the letter from the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies written yesterday March 8th.

I know you are doing your best as a politician and influencer at the Federal level. But apparently, there are not many like you, or these anti-Israel, anti-Semitic protests would have been banned a while ago, and Canada would not be the first of the G7 countries to restart the funding of ONRWA.

If you asked any of the few remaining Holocaust survivors about what is going on in Toronto (GTA), Montreal, or any large city in Canada, they would say, "Just like Germany in the 1930s." It starts innocently enough; if not checked, it will continue to expand and get ugly.

Enough is enough. These demonstrations must be stopped, and not just within 50m

of a Jewish institution, as the letter below suggests, but everywhere. Otherwise, fighting on our streets might begin because we are sick and tired of listening to the lies and extreme Jew-hatred coming from a bunch of thugs (many non-Canadians and the rest brainwashed) and ignoramuses. It's not enough to have the police stand between them and us while they chant in their own sign language and symbolisms, destroy Israel and kill the Jews. As those Holocaust survivors would say without hesitation: "It starts with angry words..." And, of course, we have all heard the saying, based on historical experience: "First they came for the Jews..."

As you can see I've cc'd some of the relevant politicians in the municipal and provincial levels. I'm sure all are concerned and realize that without government intervention, these rallies and "protests" will continue and, in all likelihood, get worse. All politicians who care for our great country must stop this anti-Semitic disease now. The pro-Hamas crowd is laughing at us.

Best regards,

Martin (Mendy) Finkelstein

 [Promenade Circle](#)

[Thornhill, On](#)

[L4J9A4](#)

A Note from Michael Levitt---Mar 8, 2024

(Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies)

Anti-Israel Demonstrators Encroach on Jewish Community Institutions

In the aftermath of the October 7 Hamas atrocities, anti-Israel demonstrators in Canada have repeatedly taken to the streets, malls and government buildings to spew hateful rhetoric demonizing the Jewish state and people. They've been anything but bashful in advocating the destruction of Israel, whether it be in strident, inflammatory calls for an intifada or "From the river to the sea" chants. But their actions this past week represent an alarming new development with serious potential ramifications for the Jewish community and Canadian society at large.

It began on Sunday in the suburb of Thornhill north of Toronto when dozens of demonstrators gathered outside the Aish Thornhill Community Shul, where a presentation on Israeli real estate was being held. While waving Palestinian flags and holding signs proclaiming "Danger due to Zionism"

and "Israel is a terrorist state," they chanted "Intifada revolution" and "Palestine is not for sale." Similar events took place outside the nearby BAYT synagogue, first with a small demonstration on Wednesday, which included an individual harassing the rabbi and a banner declaring "synagogues complicit in Palestinian ethnic cleansing." That was followed by a large demonstration outside the same synagogue yesterday, during which anti-Israel protesters chanted for intifada and "Zionism is terrorism," among many other chants. It was met with a large police presence, standing in between the protesters and counter-protesters.

Montreal was also the site of several hateful demonstrations this week. Outside the building that houses Federation CJA and the Montreal Holocaust Museum, protesters aggressively harassed Jewish community members, preventing them from entering or exiting the building while chanting, "Settlers, settlers, go back home, Palestine is our home... Palestine is ours alone." Even more vile was the antisemitic rhetoric spewed at a group of Jews outside a synagogue in Montreal. "You only know how to steal," "Just like in the past, you guys can't make it past 80 years" and, translated from Arabic to English, "We don't want to see a single Zionist" are just some of the hate-fueled words used to delegitimize the state of Israel, demonize the Jewish people and threaten the Jewish community.

Protesters marauding around Jewish neighbourhoods, flags and bullhorns in hands, screaming for the destruction of Israel, was a jarring image for the community and a wake-up call for how bad things are getting. It also suggests an escalation of tactics among anti-Israel demonstrators who clearly have no compunction about bringing their hateful antics to our neighbourhoods.

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center is working actively with other community organizations to demand safe access zones around Jewish institutions, including synagogues, schools and community centres, to prohibit such displays of hate and intimidation. This follows an injunction placed on anti-Israel protesters in Montreal following this past week's events, declaring a temporary ban on protests within 50 metres of several Jewish institutions. We are currently engaged with law enforcement and government officials, calling on them to take action that will protect all places of worship and community institutions - Jewish, Christian and Muslim alike - in Toronto and surrounding areas and to send a strong, unmistakable message that such hateful demonstrations have no place in our communities.

Shabbat Shalom,
Michael

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June 18, 2024

To the City of Vaughan Committee of the Whole:

Good afternoon. My name is Mendy Finkelstein.

I'm a resident of Thornhill, and the Mayor's office has asked me to share my opinion regarding the proposed by-law "to protect Vaughan's vulnerable social infrastructure."

I was given this opportunity because of my letter written to Melissa Lantsman and copied to various representatives of Vaughan. That letter was written in early March in response to the anger which I and many others experienced seeing the anti-Israel, anti-Jewish, pro-Hamas protests directly in front of two synagogues on Clark Ave in Thornhill.

The gist of my letter was that "enough was enough," and what starts out as "free speech" often ends up being hate speech and much more. I discussed weak political leadership, especially at the Federal and Provincial levels, and I specifically referenced the City of Toronto. I wrote that there had to be a line drawn between free speech and hate speech. Moral clarity was needed, but I hadn't seen any.

In that letter, I also alluded to Germany in the 1930s. Letting hate talk go unheeded led to violence and more, and we all know what happened then. What is disturbing the Jewish community is that the political pushback against the protests here and now has seemingly been minimal. We can see with our very own eyes how the Holocaust could have happened when decent people, the majority, did not do enough.

With its large Jewish population, Vaughan is a prime target for hateful protests. As we saw in early March, it has a bullseye aimed right at Bathurst and Clark.

Now, a little about myself. I'm 76 years old. I was born in Toronto, and so was my dad. My mother was born in Montreal. My grandparents were lucky enough to leave Ukraine, Poland, and Germany just after the First World War. For many years, my dad owned a grocery store on Baldwin St. near Mount Sinai Hospital.

Why am I telling you this? Because I am a Canadian, Torontonian, and Vaughanian true blue, and I am also a Jew who believes that as Israel goes, so goes the Jewish people and perhaps so goes the world. I've been lucky. Despite my last name, I can honestly say that I have not experienced anti-Semitism. I went to U of T, played football on the very grounds still occupied by an anti-Israel encampment, got an MBA there and had a successful career in the residential building industry. Within the industry, we often joked that it was the English 1st,

then the Jews, and then the Italians and Portuguese who built the amazing city of Toronto and the entire GTA.

The people of Toronto and the mix of citizens from all over the world have made Toronto and its environs the best place in the world to live, raise a family, and succeed...until now. We have all seen what has happened since Oct. 7, 2023. I'm here to say that Vaughan gets it. Thank you for that. Your detailed analysis resulting in this "By-Law to Protect Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure" says a great deal about your understanding of the conflict between Israel and Hamas, which, unfortunately, has spilled onto the streets and university campuses around the world.

However, the war in Gaza, let us not forget, started on October 7th with the massacre of some 1,200 innocent people in Israel, mostly Israeli, by Hamas and, yes, by many supporting Gazan citizens. And the taking of some 240 hostages, again mostly Israeli. We have all seen the headlines for these last 8 months. I guarantee that the Jewish community has seen much more than the headlines. And what we've seen is horrifying.

The consequences of this war have certainly appalled (disgusted is a better word) most citizens of Canada, Ontario, and Vaughan. Yes, there is a silent majority with some moral clarity. Where did this overt anti-Semitism start? The Gaza war? Or was it the extensive immigration we've witnessed over the past few years, with many coming from the Middle East and importing their hate of Israel and Jews? Or did it come from the Universities that, for maybe 2 generations, have apparently been feeding students a bunch of lies about Israel and the Jewish People? All political bodies, unions, schools, school boards, Universities and the mostly biased media must take corrective action now, or this will worsen.

Thank you, City of Vaughan, for developing this by-law. It's a step in the right direction and shows leadership where other political bodies have shown little. No hate protests within 100 meters of a sensitive institution is good, but it's only a start. Hate speech is hate speech, and this must be outlawed anywhere.

Let me conclude with this observation:

As some Holocaust survivors and others have said, it starts with hateful words that, if unchecked, will expand to violence, singling out the Jewish Community first.

Let's look closely at what has been happening in our backyard: "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," they chant. This means the extermination of Israel and the elimination of the Jewish people from the Middle East. That's a call for genocide of the Jewish people....and no one has said "boo."

The firebombing of a Jewish deli and a synagogue. The spray painting at Jewish-owned Indigo. Shooting into a Jewish school on an early Saturday morning. A mayor who doesn't show up for an Israeli flag raising at Toronto City Hall on Israel's Independence Day, hate protests in Jewish neighbourhoods, police giving coffee to the protesters, and, of course, the now over a month-long anti-Israel, anti-Jewish encampment at the University of Toronto with a University administration apparently incapable of dealing with this.

Without detailing the specific wording on the banners and signage, essentially, the protests have morphed from being pro-Palestinian, pro-Hamas into outright and unapologetic "wipe Israel off the map and kill the Jews."

If this blatant anti-Semitism is left unchecked, the worst is yet to come. We need look no further than the Manhattan Subway system last week: a bunch of pro-Hamas, anti-Jewish haters dressed in Hamas-like garb and wearing their standard masks stormed onto many subway cars. They shouted: "Are there any Jews here? Are there any Zionists here? Now's your chance to get off". Silence on the subway cars. A leader shouts: "Good, there are no Jews here."

What happens in the US surely moves north, with the pro-Hamas mobs of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver being enthusiastic copycats.

So, I say to The Vaughan Committee of the Whole---Thank you for showing strong municipal leadership by introducing and hopefully approving this By-Law to Protect Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure. Protests within 100m of sensitive places are a start, but it's better if hate speech and hateful acts are recognized as such anywhere and prohibited with infractions met with substantial and actionable penalties.

Thank you.

**Martin (Mendy) Finkelstein
Thornhill, On.**