Dear Chief of Police,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the Toronto Police service board as it establishes a policy on police action in respect of protests, demonstrations and occupations. In light of recent events and ongoing concerns, I urge the Toronto Police Service to adopt and enforce a zero-tolerance approach to hate speech and antisemitic rhetoric at protests and public demonstrations within our city. As a concerned citizen deeply committed to the principles of equality, respect, and safety for all members of our community this is a critical issue.

Recent protests have seen an alarming increase in hate speech and antisemitic remarks, which undermine our values of inclusivity and respect. Such speech not only harms targeted individuals and groups but also jeopardizes the overall safety and unity of our community.

While I appreciate the challenging nature of maintaining order at protests, and that a balance must be struck between upholding free speech and ensuring public safety, it is critical that all individuals are safeguarded against hate and discrimination.

Clear guidelines and communication to the public on a zero tolerance policy for hate speech is essential to ensure that all participants in public demonstrations understand the boundaries of acceptable conduct. Strict enforcement against hate speech will deter individuals from using such rhetoric, knowing that there will be immediate and serious consequences. Furthermore, by addressing hate speech swiftly and decisively, the Toronto Police Service will help maintain public order and prevent incidents that could escalate into violence or discrimination.

In addition, the Toronto Police Service should implement training and protocols for officers to enable the proper recognition of hate speech and antisemitic behaviour and effective methods to address such activity to ensure that these offenses are met with swift and decisive intervention.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I trust that the Toronto Police Service will take these concerns into consideration and continue to uphold its commitment to a safe and inclusive community for all. I look forward to seeing positive changes in how these important issues are addressed.

Sincerely,

Malka Lewittes