

Dear Toronto Police Service Board,

My family and I are horrified by the unprecedented amount of hate, intimidation and violence targeted at Jewish and Israeli Torontonians since Hamas and Islamic Jihad's massacre and kidnapping of Israelis on October 7, 2023. We are born and raised in Toronto, and have never experienced this madness before. Hate and violence have been normalized. Protests, demonstrations and occupations with the purpose to spread hate and violence, intimidate the Jewish and Israeli community and make life unbearable have gone on for over 10 months. Jewish people have been beaten. Synagogues and Jewish schools have been shot at. Businesses have been set on fire. For the first time in our lives, we feel unsafe living and working in Toronto. We are traumatized and terrorized. We fear for our lives going to Jewish buildings, businesses and neighbourhoods, and other areas where protests, demonstrations or occupations are occurring.

We deeply appreciate the protection that the Toronto Police Service has provided for the Jewish community, and the difficult challenges that the Toronto Police Service faces regarding hateful and violent people. The Toronto Police Service is under-staffed and under-funded. More police officers and money are needed for the hate crime unit.

We fully support the recommendations of the Alliance of Canadians Combatting Antisemitism and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.

Zero tolerance for hate, without exception, must be an overriding principle of the Board's policy on public order. There remains a poor understanding of the difference between protected speech and hate speech, particularly as the terms are applied to anti-Israel and anti-Zionist activities. The Board must understand this difference to inform its policy.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism (adopted by the Canadian and Ontario Governments) must be understood by, and provide guidance to, the Toronto Police Service in its law enforcement decisions for protests, demonstrations and occupations.

<https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>

Enhanced training, including case scenario training, in anti-Semitism, anti-Israel, anti-Zionism hate must be provided to all police officers and cadets. Training must include the full content and enforcement of federal and Ontario criminal laws and city by-laws regarding hate crimes, intimidation, protests, demonstrations, occupations, blocking access to buildings, targeting buildings and neighbourhoods, and concealing identity while committing a crime. Training must include hateful and genocidal language (such as "from the river to the sea ...", "intifada", "Zionism is racism", "Israeli genocide") in English and foreign languages. This language does not depend on context. At a minimum, the organizers know the meaning of this language. Their intent to spread hate and violence is clear.

The policy must include a framework for how to police protests, demonstrations and occupations, with the overriding principle of zero tolerance for hate, without exception. The Toronto Police Service is under-utilizing the legal tools available. The policy must identify the full range of criminal enforcement measures available to the police under federal laws, Ontario laws and Toronto by-laws. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms also apply for protests, demonstrations and occupations in public spaces. Police must collect evidence to ensure that people committing a crime are charged and convicted. All protests, demonstrations and occupations must be videotaped. All foreign languages must be translated into English. Arrests of people committing crimes must be made immediately, especially people who are concealing their identity, and not wait until later to identify and locate suspects.

Police must investigate the activities and funding of organizations that are organizing or participating in hateful protests, demonstrations and occupations (for example, Samidoun and Students for Justice in Palestine). Many news articles have reported how these events and groups are funded by foreign organizations and governments who are participating in or supporting the multi-front war against Israel.

<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/disinformation-iran-russia-anti-israel-protests-canada>

Police must investigate extremist financing and money laundering.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide comments about the Board's Public Order Policy.

Sincerely,  
Aaron Paul