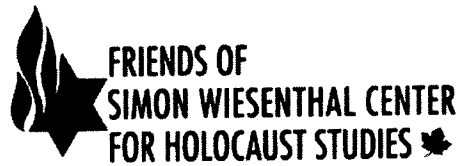


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June 11, 2013

Toronto City Councillors
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Toronto City Councillor:

I understand you will soon be voting about funding for Toronto's Pride Week. Over the last number of years, I have met with many of you and many City of Toronto bureaucratic officials to express my dismay regarding the continued belligerence of Pride Toronto in allowing hatred and intolerance into the parade.

We have worked hand in hand with many gay community leaders and given numerous deputations to Council in an effort to collaboratively seek resolution.

At the heart of the matter, of course, is Toronto's continuing funding of the event while groups like Queers against Israeli Apartheid and others march with slogans calling Israel an "apartheid state." This call is a premeditated strategy to undermine the existence of the Jewish state and foment hatred for its people and supporters.

Over the years, groups like QuAIA have fostered incitement, divisiveness and hatred against Israel and the Jewish community. They have alienated many people in the gay and straight communities who would otherwise participate in Pride. As a community leader, I have had to turn down invitations to march for this reason.

So long as the City of Toronto finances this continuing hatred and refuses to recognize the defamation and discrimination in city policy concerning this matter, the City is an accomplice to this hatred and is alienating a large number of the very people it governs.

The City of Toronto should not provide funding if groups use Pride as a platform for hatred against other nations and peoples. I am asking you to place this condition on Pride Toronto, should it seek funding and resources from the city.

P.T.O. →

We have learned from history that taking a stand for what is right, can make a difference, even if you are in the minority. In this case, it is not a difficult stand to take. Israel is the only free and democratic state in the Middle East. Moreover, it boasts the only two gay pride parades in the region, has legalized gay rights and regularly provides sanctuary to gays from the Muslim world.

I implore you to look into your heart; think about history and look at the facts. But most of all, do not alienate Toronto's Jewish community, which has contributed so much to the fabric of our incredible city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Avi Benlolo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Avi Benlolo
President & CEO, Canada