



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Communications Report

Date: December 04, 2023

To: Toronto Public Library Board

From: City Librarian

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. receives Communication (a) from Alex Glo to TPL Board Members, dated November 30, 2023, expressing concern about a panellist participating in an academic freedom discussion, part of the Library's 'What's at Stake' series, for information.

SIGNATURE

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

Philippa Williamson

From: AlexG <hayave93@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:32 PM
To: Philippa Williamson
Subject: Does TPL Welcome Radical Anti-Israel Author for Appearance on Dec 5th?

CAUTION: This email has originated from outside of TPL. Do not click on any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Williamson,

I'd like to request to raise the issue below to the TPL board on Dec 4th, 2023.

Is it true that TPL invited Norman Finkelstein - Radical Anti-Israel Author, whose writings wrongly accuse Israel of manipulating the Holocaust to suppress, at the TPL's Dec. 5 event – part of an “Intellectual Freedom” program?

Especially now, when the situation with antisemitism is terrible, how is it possible in our city and our library to allow a person, who celebrated an unhuman event in blog post applauding Hamas' brutal Oct. 7 assault – during which the terrorists rampaged through the country's south, massacring more than 1,200 people, raping women, killing kids, and abducted hundreds of civilians, including women and children – as “heroic resistance.” Finkelstein even dared to inaccurately compare Hamas' barbaric terrorism to the Jewish resistance's Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, as well as John Brown's stand against slavery in the United States.

“The irony in the TPL's decision to feature Finkelstein in their speaker series is that his anti-Zionist worldview already represents the ‘dominant narrative’ on university campuses,” said Michael Mostyn, B'nai Brith Canada's Chief Executive Officer. “It is shocking that our publicly funded library system is so clueless to the daily suffering of Jewish students on campus caused precisely by this form of antisemitism.

“By inverting the narrative, while remaining blind to the reality of Jewish pain on university campuses, the TPL is contributing to the further marginalization of a Jewish community already under siege, and that is absolutely unacceptable.”

I add my voice to all people demanding to cancel Norman Finkelstein's participation in the event and avoid people that “seed” hatred and spread misinformation, to participate in your programs.

Thank you
Alex Glo