

## Submission by Martin Gladstone

Please accept this as an individual submission.

Anti-Semitism has a new face and a new arena in Toronto: the Gay Pride Parade. This is an annual event held in the City of Toronto whose mandate is to celebrate human rights, diversity, tolerance, the right to be different, and inclusion. I am a member of the gay community as well as a member of the Jewish community. I feel strongly about both.

I grew up in North Toronto (b. 1957). I am pleased to share I have no memories of discrimination or anti-Semitism in my home town of Toronto. However, that has dramatically changed in the past few years.

While you may be familiar with the new arenas of anti-Israel advocacy, such as university campuses, the most perverse face of the new anti-Semitism is the Gay Pride celebrations in Toronto.

The Pride parade, which took place on June 28<sup>th</sup> this year, is the largest tourist event in the City of Toronto. It attracted over 1,000,000 attendees for a party.

What stood out among the colourful and energetic floats was the officially sanctioned inclusion of anti-Israel marchers. They carried anti-Israel signs and called for the destruction of Israel by chanting the slogan: "*Fist by fist, wall by wall, apartheid state has got to fall.*" They carried signs which read: "I'm Coming Out against Israeli Apartheid".

These groups have hijacked the parade from its celebration of gay and lesbian culture and accomplishments, to an anti-Israel hate fest in the name of free speech and political activism. They are part of a concerted campaign to brand Israel as an apartheid state in the same mould as the former South Africa in order to delegitimize its existence and ultimately dismantle it.

That the Toronto gay pride parade is now an arena for anti-Israel advocacy is deeply disturbing for the following reasons:

**Pride has no mandate to engage in anti-Israel advocacy.**

Pride Toronto is an Ontario incorporated not-for-profit. As such it is given special status and privilege. It does not pay taxes. It has access to grant money. But it must reasonably live within its stated objects. Those stated objects are:

**“...staging in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto an annual celebration and informational, educational and cultural festival by and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgender people of their sexual and gender orientations and identities, and their histories, cultures, communities, organizations, relationships, achievements and lives;”**

Engaging in anti-Israel advocacy is not part of its mandate. It runs contrary to its own Charter and Mission Statement. All appeals to the Executive Committee to keep the parade focused on gay and lesbian issues were ignored. The effect was Jewish gays and Jews by extension were excluded from the celebration. Many did not attend as the environment was tense and security became an issue.

**It violates the Mission Statement of Pride Toronto.**

All participants in the Pride Parade are required to abide by the Mission Statement which reads:

*The applicant will not present images or messages that promote or condone, or may promote or condone, violence, hatred, degradation or negative stereotypes of any person(s) or group(s).*

This statement was disregarded when it came to bashing Israel and Jews by extension. Israel was singled out. One marcher wore a crossed out swastika to suggest that Israel was a fascist state in the same mould as Nazi Germany. There were many other images that were degrading, hateful, false, and hurtful to Jews.

These groups publicly marched on public grant money and major corporate sponsors such as the Toronto-Dominion Bank.

The inclusion of the anti-Israel marchers further violated all the anti-discrimination funding requirements of the City of Toronto. Funding provided by the City of Toronto is granted on the

basis that all people are respected, and there is not a hateful environment created. It also violates the basis of provincial funding - to promote tourism.

However, the City and sponsors took a hands off approach and ignored appeals from respected human rights organizations and affected individuals like myself who felt marginalized and argued that there was no place or mandate for singling out and basing Israel in a gay rights parade.

### **Israel is a society that recognizes and protects same sex rights.**

Marching singularly against Israel in a gay rights parade – a society that respects gay and lesbian rights and gives them the protection of law – makes no sense. Gays in Israel serve in the military. Same sex marriages from abroad are recognized. There are only two gay pride parades in the middle east: Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem. Most countries in the middle east flog, persecute, and honour kill gays and lesbians. In the context of a gay rights parade, Israel should be celebrated for its human rights record. These marchers could not march for gay rights in Tehran or Gaza but they could in Israel.

### **Other considerations**

The tell tale signs of the new anti-semitism was that security had to be radically increased this year for the pride parade; that the queers against Israeli apartheid with their political anti- Israel messaging had to be physically separated from the Jewish gay groups that walk the parade each year *in support of gay rights for all*; and that for the first time the hate crimes unit of the Toronto Police took an active role to forewarn groups not to agitate.

As a gay rights advocate, my voice has been raised to say that the pride parade is for all. Gays and Jewish gays should not be excluded by being singled out and vilified. However, the Executive Committee rejected this. They officially sanctioned the anti-Israel messaging even though it was challenged by radio shows and many respected human rights groups. More horrible for the Jewish community was that Pride sanctioned a grand marshal who was a featured anti-Israel speaker. This delivered the optic that Jewish gays were something less at their parade. Many simply stayed home rather than be excluded and vilified. Many stayed away for security concerns.

The disturbing part is that ideas could not be exchanged on their merits. The Pride Executive Committee and the anti-Israel marchers they sanctioned could not escape the question that was posed over and over again: What does anti-Israel advocacy have to do with the celebration of gay pride? The answers generally engaged in anti-logical knots that no reasonable person could understand. At the end of the day there was never a credible answer provided except to say “we don’t take sides” which is a non-answer. Rather those who posed the question were positioned as enemies of free speech. Many blogs threatened violence against Jews.

The anti-Israel marchers hijacked the gay rights parade for an anti Israeli agenda that has nothing to do with gay rights. Its selected moral outrage against Israel is ridiculous in the context of a gay rights parade. The apartheid lie against Israel categorizes it as a state that is a crime against humanity and delegitimizes its existence.

The emboldening of the anti-Israel advocacy at the Toronto Pride parade has now led to its inclusion for the first time in the Montreal gay pride parade.

To single out and vilify Israel in a gay human rights celebration; to find a new arena to brand Israel as an apartheid state based on the same model as the former South Africa; to allow the abuse of grant and sponsorship money to present the optics that Israel stands alone as the greatest human rights violater on earth, shows that the spread of anti-Semitism is spreading into the fabric of Canadian Society in new and perverse arenas.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours Truly,

Martin Gladstone

May 27, 2009



## PUBLIC STATEMENT FROM PRIDE TORONTO

Pride Toronto wishes to state publicly that it is a non-partisan organization created to serve the LGBTTIQQ2S\* community of Toronto in all its cultural, religious, ethnic and sexual diversity. The organization does not have any affiliations whatsoever to political entities or causes. It exists for the purpose of delivering the annual Pride festival, which is an informational, educational and cultural festival, not only of the sexual orientations and gender identities of the community but also of its histories, cultures, communities, organizations, relationships, achievements and lives. The festival includes the Parade and Dyke March, both public events that enable the participation of community and corporate groups.

Pride Toronto has paid close attention to its role and responsibilities with regard to issues of a political nature, and has retained legal counsel to advise it in such matters. In doing so, it has determined that in order to perform in accordance with the objects for which the organization is registered, as stated in our Letters Patent, participants in the various events will be required to stringently adhere to the criteria stated on the application forms to which they are contractually bound by signature. **These criteria include: the submission of a Parade entry that carries a message supportive of the LGBTTIQQ2S community**, provision of a correct description of the entry in advance, assumption of responsibility for all participants in the contingent, and acceptance of the organization's right to reject and remove entries that violate Canada's hate crime laws or contravenes the organization's anti-discrimination policy, including those promoting racism, sexism and homophobia, amongst others.

Pride Toronto rejects in the strongest terms any statements made by persons claiming to speak on its behalf that embrace a political or partisan viewpoint, and confirms that only statements made by its official spokespeople (Board co-Chairs Mark Singh and Genevieve D'lorio; and Executive Director Tracey Sandilands) may be attributed to it.

Pride Toronto further confirms that its theme this year is 'Can't Stop. Won't Stop' and that the 2009 Parade will once again be a celebration of the queer community, its achievements to date and its future, and requests formally that all participants in the festival respect the spirit of Pride and that this is reflected in their entries.

\*(Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, queer, questioning and two-spirited)

**Pride Toronto** is the not-for-profit organization that hosts Pride Week, an annual festival held during the last week of June in downtown Toronto. Pride Toronto exists to celebrate the history, courage, diversity and future of Toronto's LGBTTIQQ2S communities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirited) and is one of the leading cultural events of its kind in the world. Toronto's Pride Week has been named the Best Festival in Canada by the Canadian Special Events Industry, is recognized as one of only Eight Signature Events in the city of Toronto, and is ranked as one of the TOP 50 festivals in Ontario by Festivals and Events Ontario. [www.pridetoronto.com](http://www.pridetoronto.com).

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LETTERS PATENT

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of the Companies Act and is subject to  
these Letters Patent and Rules

Ministère de  
la Consommation  
et du Commerce

LETTRES PATENTE

La présente requête forme la charte de la  
compagnie sans personne morale  
par lettres patentes et règles de

Ontario Corporation Number  
Numéro de la personne morale en Ontario

1157636

NOVEMBER 3 0 NOVEMBRE, 1995

Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / Le Ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce

Per/par

Director / Directeur

APPLICATION FOR INCORPORATION OF A CORPORATION WITHOUT SHARE CAPITAL  
REQUÊTE EN CONSTITUTION D'UNE PERSONNE MORALE SANS CAPITAL ACTIONS

Form 1  
Corporations  
Act  
Formule 1  
Loi sur les  
personnes  
morales

1. The name of the corporation is / Dénomination sociale de la personne morale :

L	E	S	B	I	A	N	,	G	A	Y	,	B	I	S	E	X	U	A	L	,	T	R	A	N	S			
E	X	U	A	L		A	N	D		T	R	A	N	S	G	E	N	D	E	R	A	L		P	R	I	D	E
T	O	R	O	N	T	O																						

2. The address of the head office of the corporation is / Adresse du siège social:

508 Church Street, 3rd Floor

(Street & No. or R.R. No. or Lot & Concession No. or Lot & Plan No. Post Office Box No. not acceptable, if Multi-Office Building give Room No.)

(Rue et numéro, ou R.R. et numéro, ou numéro de lot et de concession, ou numéro de lot et de plan, numéro de boîte postale inacceptable, s'il s'agit d'un édifice à bureaux, numéro du bureau)

Toronto, Ontario

(Name of Municipality)  
(Nom de la municipalité)

M 4 Y 2 C 8  
(Postal Code/Code postal)

3. The applicants who are to be the first directors of the corporation are:

Requerants appelés à devenir les premiers administrateurs de la personne morale :

Name in full, including all first, middle names  
Nom et prénoms au complet

Residence address, giving Street & No., or R.R., No. or Lot & Concession No., or Lot & Plan No., and Postal Code (Post Office Box No. not acceptable)  
Adresse personnelle et compris la rue et le numéro ou la R.R. et le numéro, ou le numéro de lot et de concession, ou Le numéro de lot et de plan, ainsi que le code postal (Numéro de boîte postale inacceptable)

Laurie Anne Bryson

12A Cawthra Square, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1K8

Richard Thomas Churchill

52 Havelock Street, Toronto, Ontario M6H 3B5

Aijsa Kinton Craig

82 Maitland Street, #1, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1E1

James Roderick Kelly

100 Maitland Street, #904, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1E2

Michael William McGaraughey

216 Seaton Street, #4, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2T4

Eric Moore

980 Broadview Avenue, #706, Toronto, Ontario M4K 3Y1

James Bryant Nero

565 Sherbourne Street, #1115, Toronto, Ontario M4X 1W7

4. The objects for which the corporation is incorporated are:  
Objets pour lesquels la personne morale est constituée:

staging in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto an annual celebration and informational, educational and cultural festival by and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgenderal people of their sexual and gender orientations and identities, and their histories, cultures, communities, organizations, relationships, achievements and lives;

and such other complementary purposes in furtherance of and not inconsistent with the foregoing objects.





Pride  
 Parade  
 June 28/09  
 Toronto

← military  
 garb

Swastika  
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