



For immediate release

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies commends Toronto mayoral candidates on their support for a hate-free Gay Pride Parade

Toronto- April 28, 2010 – Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) commends the majority of candidates running for mayor in the city of Toronto for their principled stand against the inclusion of hate messaging promoted by Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) in the Toronto Gay Pride parade.

George Smitherman said, “As a gay man who has attended every pride since 1986 I protest the plan to use pride, a celebration of the LGBT community, as a backdrop for this debate. It’s time for the Pride committee to act, prevent their participation and in so doing protect this amazing institution that many have labored to create.”

Most other mayoralty candidates agree with these sentiments. Rocco Rossi maintains, “It would be incredibly tragic to target the only country in the Middle East that has not one but two Gay Pride parades,” while Rob Ford said he would “absolutely” support any motion to deny funding to Pride if QuAIA participates. Georgio Mammoliti was quoted in today’s Toronto Sun saying that participation by QuAIA “. . . is racism at its worst.” Sarah Thomson sums up the majority opinion, asking, “Why is the city waiting . . .?”

“It is rare to have a majority of mayoral candidates in complete agreement” says Avi Benlolo, President and CEO of FSWC. “It’s time for Toronto’s current Mayor, David Miller to take action and deny funding to Pride unless it is willing to comply with the City’s anti-discrimination guidelines. “I am certain the City of Toronto does not want to be complicit in fomenting antisemitism by bowing to pressure from extremist groups.”

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Media Contact:

Stacey Starkman

Communications Coordinator

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies

416-864-9735 x 31

sstarkman@fswc.ca