

Alberto Quintanilla

From: Keith Parker <kparker1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:22 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public comment on Item 3a of City Council agenda on 11/14/23
Attachments: Keith Parker submission for City Council 11.14.23.docx

Please accept my attached submission into the record for the City Council meeting on November 14, 2023. This is in relation to item 3A, the ceremonial item, Proclamation: United Against Hate Week.

Thank you

Keith Parker
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As Fremont stands poised to reconfirm our commitment to standing United Against Hate, it is worth taking a moment to reflect on what that actually means. To me, it means that we do not tolerate unfair treatment of others. It means that we stand up to racism, sexism, and any of the other multitudes of intolerance and discrimination that have long plagued society, wherever we may find it and in whatever form it may take.

It is both important and timely to discuss this today, because as much as we may disavow it, there is a significant and growing wave of antisemitism that can be found here in our city. Of course, this growing hatred is not limited to Fremont, it is a global plague. That said, we are not immune from it either.

I recently had the opportunity to attend a community meeting with our Jewish neighbors where we discussed the discrimination, the threats, and the violence that they are facing here, in the happiest city in America. They told me of the intimidation and fear inflicted upon their children in our local schools. We spoke of threats to their businesses, community centers, and places of worship. We spoke of the silence they heard from local leaders in the wake of all this. Antisemitism is real and it is here.

The cause of this is obvious. On October 7, unspeakable horrors were inflicted upon innocent men, women, and children in Israel. The evils visited upon these innocents were so brutal and horrific, that any words of mine to describe it would seem pale and feckless in comparison. Israel's response to this attack on civilization has uncovered a global wave of antisemitism that must be countered by all those of good conscience.

While we can, and we should, debate the level of violence that is being visited upon the people of Gaza, children in Fremont must not face threats and intimidation in our local schools and community as a result of the actions of others half a world away. It is our great shame that this even needs to be said.

In the wake of the September 11 terror attacks American Muslims were faced with hatred and intolerance. That was wrong. During the Covid crisis Chinese Americans faced violence and racism, and that was wrong. Now, Jewish Americans are confronted with rising antisemitism and all the pain and violence associated with that blight. This is wrong too.

If we are to be united against hate, then we must be united against this as well. We must be united against hatred and intolerance in all its forms. If we do not stand against this, then what do we stand for?

Therefore, when we reconfirm our commitment to stand against hate, I strongly encourage the council to ensure that any resolution includes language that emphasizes our opposition to hate, in all its forms.

Sincerely,

Keith Parker