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RE: Mississauga amends noise bylaw to allow call to prayer (Letter to The Editor)

An unconstitutional, anti-national compromise was passed by Mississauga's City Council on Wednesday April 29 2020. The motion offers comfort to the Islamic community at the expense of that of the larger Canadian population.

In a shocking move violating the Charter of Rights and Freedom, Mississauga's Municipal Mayor and City Councilors voted unanimously to temporarily waive current noise bylaw restrictions "for the broadcasting of the evening call to prayer from local mosques and other non-residential buildings regularly used for worship, for the period of Ramadan . . . up to May 24, 2020." This new motion allows the call to prayer be broadcast only once per day. All religious organizations of course, will remain closed as ordered by the province since the imposing of emergency measures designed to help fight the pandemic.

"Council's decision today to support the broadcasting of the call to prayer during Ramadan this year will provide inspiration, familiarity and comfort to our city's Muslim community during this challenging time," explained Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie. Inherent in her conciliatory move to comfort one religious group is the implication that all of Mississauga, with its large Muslim population, cares nothing for the rights and comforts of peoples other faiths, or for that matter, of any stressed and nervous individuals affected by noise pollution during this crisis time of "lockdown" such as students studying for exams, seniors and sick people, all of whom will be made distinctly UN-comfortable and potentially sicker by this act of appeasement. How would Ms. Crombie feel if she and her Covid-19 confined family lived next door to a loud-speaker equipped Mosque?

Hindu Forum Canada questions the decisions made by municipal politicians of Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton that allows mosques to broadcast their call to prayer through loudspeakers.



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Hindu Forum Canada believes in the country's secular foundation that guarantees separation of religion and politics. We also believe that people from all religious backgrounds should live in Canada, free from persecution, free to practice their faith in their respective religious centers, but we, as a society, should not impose any particular faith on other communities completely disregarding the rights of those other communities. Hindu Forum Canada sees this act as a violation of our secular values that dictate the separation of religious and political propensities.

Political decision-making has been suffering from a steady decline in ideological clarity for decades, evident in its confusion over secularism and appeasement politics, especially at the Federal Level —we are now paying the price.

Secularism has been an integral part of Canadian ideology that needs to be maintained and adhered to. Although we see the importance in offering temporary comfort to Muslim groups, we must look ahead at what sort of compromises this could lead to. Once we invoke the influence of religious tradition to influence the laws that have been established to guarantee religious freedom in Canada, the laws that make Canada a wonderful place to live and raise a family, we threaten to undermine the entire Canadian Constitution the way the passing of this single current local amendment guarantees the erosion of religious freedom into nothing but dust.

Such unthinking action in one community, Mississauga, provides a toe hold for this infected thinking to sweep our entire nation. Will Canadians recognize and heed this threat?

We believe changing the law based on religious thinking must be of serious concern to every Canadian, including progressive, secular and liberal Muslims. The right to live, think and express freely your opinions is one of the great achievements of human civilization. These values belong to all of us regardless of our background or origin. We cannot limit these achievements to 'western values' or 'cultural sensitivity'.

We must each strongly and unequivocally demand one equal law for everyone. Canadian culture is said to be collectivist, meaning that the welfare of the group and group relationships are a primary value.

We, the Directors of Hindu Forum Canada urge all our Canadian politicians at all levels of Government to not indulge in mixing religion with politics.

Thank you

Hindu Forum Canada