



December 18, 2018

The Editor  
Edmonton Journal

Dear Sir/Madam:

**Re: Appearance of Hateful Graffiti Outside Muslim Business**

According to a report released by Statistics Canada, hate crimes in Canada reached an all-time high in 2017, particularly in Ontario and Quebec. In recent weeks, some manifestations of these incidents have also appeared in Alberta through hate graffiti, often based on anti-Semitic and Islamophobic messages, being spray painted outside certain businesses and public buildings here in Edmonton. Most recently, one of these racist messages was seen outside a Muslim-owned west-Edmonton strip mall, with words such as "Kill Muslims", "Kill Lebs" "Hitler Lives", "Swastika", etc. Similar messages were left outside the Aldergrove Elementary and the Lois Hole Library a week or two earlier.

While these racist messages rightly get noticed and publicized by the news media, there are also many positive initiatives to address racist attitudes and stereotypes within our city that often go unnoticed within the mainstream media. One such development is the holding of a Diversity Day organized by the Edmonton Public School board in collaboration with the Phoenix Multi-Faith Society for Harmony to promote greater multi-ethnic and multi-racial understanding and respect among young students. The Phoenix Society, which includes equal membership from the three Abrahamic faiths – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – has consistently supported this annual event since it started about three years ago.

The Phoenix Society is committed to promoting and supporting any such initiatives for a better future for all our citizens where peace, harmony and security always triumphs over violence, intolerance and fear. In line with this philosophy, the Society also strongly supports the work of the Hate Crimes Unit of the Edmonton Police Service to send out a strong message to any hate-monger individuals or groups that such racist attitudes will not be tolerated within our society and, wherever appropriate, will be prosecuted according to law.

Sincerely,

Masood Peracha  
Presiding Co-Chair