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Immigration

Jewish advocates call on gov to strengthen border security before accepting Gazan refugees

By **Clayton DeMaine, True North Wire** - August 31, 2024

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Source: X

After a thwarted ISIS terrorist attack at the end of last month in the Greater Toronto Area, a Jewish advocacy group is calling on the Canadian government to strengthen border security before welcoming thousands of Gazan refugees into the country.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs questioned the efficacy of Canada's border security screening process, as the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security grilled about the terrorist incident on Thursday. The committee questioned how a man who was allegedly in an ISIS terrorist video dismembering prisoners with a sword was granted Canadian citizenship.

In a post on X, CIJA shared a letter it sent to Immigration Minister Marc Miller, asking for assurance about the security procedures at the border before the government welcomes the planned 5,000 refugees from Gaza.

"The safety and security of its population represents the paramount responsibility of any government," the group said. "This is especially the case with respect to threatened or targeted segments of society like the Jewish community, which has experienced unprecedented threats over the last period."

A report by the Canadian Press using data given by B'nai Brith Canada found that antisemitic hate crime reports more than doubled last year from the previous year. Meanwhile, reports on antisemitic incidences have become a near-weekly occurrence since the Hamas-led terrorist attacks on Israel on Oct. 7.

With antisemitism on the rise coupled with potentially lax border security procedures, which led to an alleged ISIS-linked father-son terrorist attack that RCMP thwarted at the end of last month, CIJA is concerned for the safety of Canadian Jews.

"In light of these concerns, we are deeply troubled by the Canadian government's recent decision to grant visas to 5,000 residents of Gaza who are related to Canadian citizens or permanent residents, reportedly without a full security assessment conducted by Canadian authorities," CIJA said. "While we recognize the humanitarian motivations behind this decision, it is imperative that the significant security risks that have emerged in recent events be effectively addressed."

CIJA isn't the first to raise safety concerns about welcoming in refugees from Hamas-controlled Gaza.

In May, Immigration lawyer Sergio Karas warned about the potentially disastrous consequences of the federal government's plan to welcome refugees from the region.

He noted the near impossibility of vetting people from the terrorist-controlled region as it lacks the infrastructure to provide background checks and an education system which has repeatedly been implicated in endorsing violence against Jews.

Further, he noted that a survey from the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research found that 71% of people in Gaza and the West Bank endorsed Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel. 59% said they would prefer Hamas to govern Gaza, while only 5% of Palestinians thought Hamas' actions on the seventh constituted a war crime.

Other nations, such as Australia, have cancelled visas from the region due to the logistical difficulties related to Palestinians illegally immigrating to Egypt, muddying the immigration screening process.

U.S. senators raised security concerns about Canada bringing in Gazan refugees last month, citing the possibility of unvetted terrorists coming to Canada rather than crossing the southern border into the States.

CIJA restated its belief in the importance of immigration to Canada's national identity, emphasizing that their concern is rooted in concern for the safety of Jewish Canadians and Canada as a whole.

"Canada has a long-standing tradition of offering refuge to those in need, but it is crucial that we do so while ensuring the security of our citizens," CIJA said. "We urge the government to reassess and significantly strengthen its immigration screening processes to prevent individuals who may pose a risk to national security from entering Canada."

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