

LETTER: Deal directly with aggressors

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

In a pivotal time that is putting to test the core values of our civilization, culture and values and when we are reminded more often than ever before of how fortunate we are to live in a country that has fought so hard for all of us to enjoy freedom in the whole extent of the concept, I find that the District of North Vancouver's proposal to censor any letters or emails sent to the mayor or council because they could contain "inappropriate, offensive, misleading, harassing or threatening" offensive and preposterous.

Just to learn that the staff, mayor and council have approved this brutal attempt in camera to get away with silencing anybody who does not approve their ways, proves that this proposal is controversial and morally wrong. To block one of our core values: freedom of speech and to stop anybody who has a say on district policy is absolutely wrong, regardless of what the district's lawyers say.

The District of North Vancouver should reverse such policy and deal with "offensive or aggressive communications from the public" the same way that any other citizen would do. If an action, letter or email crosses the line, then report it to the RCMP and let them start the legal process to deal with this in a constitutional manner.

The filtering of communications through the municipal clerk means that one person will decide what is deemed appropriate and what isn't. Did we not choose our representatives through an election so they would represent us in the district? We did not elect the municipal clerk to become the judge of our opinions.

The ban on direct communications must be stopped right now. We should value and show pride in every single one of our freedoms. We must show the world that a lot of Canadians have died for a reason: to protect our freedoms, that we value and will defend our rights, no matter what.

If the administrative officer's reasoning is true that the fact is that there is a "very, very small number of people who repeatedly cross the line," then, as I said, deal with that very, very small number of people the legal way and don't resort to punishing and silencing people with this draconian approach.

Mayor Richard Walton and council must stop this action immediately before we start a trend of silencing Canadian citizens for many other actions that could be interpreted as offensive.

Please remember that we live here because we believe in our constitution and in the values expressed in the Charter of Rights. We have a history of tolerance and understanding and we have a worldwide reputation on how we deal with adversity by the means of the law and not by the means of force.

Elias B. Merkins

West Vancouver

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by [clicking here](#) or post a comment below.