

Submission of the Human Rights Action Group

The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights should recommend a requirement that all funding sources of organizations supporting protests and demonstrations at post-secondary institutions should be disclosed.

The encampments and demonstrations at Canadian colleges and universities protesting against the Israeli response to the Hamas attack on Israel of October 7th have been receiving private financial support. The funding itself is public knowledge. But the source of funding is not. There should be a requirement that the source of funding for these protests be publicly disclosed.

On [Craigslist](#), a November 2023 ad read:

"We are looking for 5-7 actors or activists to hold panels and distribute flyers in front of a venue as a peaceful, legal protest. Needed for November 24th, evening, 2-3 hours, paying \$30/hour."

As the Craigslist ad indicated, those paying protestors do not care if the protestors actually believe their protests. "Actors" will do.

Beryl Wajzman, editor of Montreal's newspaper The Suburban, [stated](#) in December 2023 about protests in Montreal:

"pro-Hamas fanatics, ... know they're not going to be taken in by the police. They know they can trespass, and block traffic, and more."

Wajzman stated that they're paid to do so, that pro-Hamas protesters can get up to \$50 for each protest they attend, and they've divided the city up into grids, with leaders responsible for each grid and that most of the protesters are non-residents and students from Arab countries.

Warren Kinsella of Toronto Sun [reported](#) in January 2024 about Victoria protesters:

"They've got professionally-rendered signs and banners. They've got transportation,

and food and drink. And they've got organizers who wear uniforms and control the crowds."

The funds in Victoria come from the Plenty Collective. The Plenty Collective [states](#) this on its website:

"Palestinian Solidarity Fund

This fund is available to folks or groups based in Lekwungen Territory (aka "Victoria, BC") who are incurring costs related to supporting or organizing actions in solidarity with Palestine and Palestinian people. This fund is to help cover costs incurred when organizing or participating in local actions. This can include, but is not limited to, the costs of lost wages, supplies, items for fundraising, paying speakers, etc.

Applications will be processed on a first come first serve basis, however applications from Palestinian and BIPOC people will be higher priority. This is our first time running something like this, so we are just learning! Applications are overseen by an anonymous board of volunteers.

This fund is entirely supported by community donations. It is tracked and maintained separately from all our organizational finances. If you would like to donate to or run a fundraiser to contribute to this fund, please contact us. "

For other categories of funding, the Plenty Collective posts on its website the monthly opening balance, the closing balance, income and expenses. It also provides, in at least some cases, specific dollar information about sources of funds and expenditures. For the Palestinian Solidarity Fund there is no such information.

According to Warren Kinsella, the Fund has been spending close to \$20,000 on these protests every month. That amount is far more than all their other monthly expenditures combined.

Ian Ward, a municipal councillor for Colwood on Vancouver Island, described the pay-a-protestor payment scheme:

"They are highly organized. I've watched them. A van pulls up, and they've got flags, signs, and they've got organizers from the Plenty Collective wearing orange vests controlling the crowds. ... And they have control because they are holding the cash for the protestors ... We don't see them being this organized, and this well-funded, without offshore money."

Protestors are not just reimbursed expenses. They are paid to protest. As the Plenty Collective states, protesters are paid for "lost wages"

We do not see these sorts of protests at colleges and universities on any other issue. Many of the protestors are [not students](#).

There are some [denials](#), people claiming that the allegation of outside funding is a fabrication to discredit legitimate protest. The answer is transparency.

The presence of organizational support for the protests and encampments is incontestable. Any organization engaged in supporting the protests and encampments should be required to disclose details of both sources of funding and expenditures. The public has a right to know.

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