

Man planning to bomb Toronto synagogues 'to kill as many Jews as possible' gets house arrest as punishment

By Geoffrey Clarfield

This news reported in [The National Post](#) is very depressing.

A man who said he planned on bombing every synagogue in Toronto to "to kill as many Jews as possible" was sentenced to house arrest Monday after a sentencing hearing that heard of the terror and fear his vivid threats caused.

Waisuddin Akbari, 41, was ordered to stay at home for 60 days, followed by three years of probation, after voicing clear, hate-filled threats last year.

The "light sentence" shows the urgent need to reform Canada's hate crime laws, said Jaime Kirzner-Roberts, a director with the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies. "At a time of rampant antisemitism in Canada and elsewhere, it sends an alarming message that threats to slaughter Jews and bomb synagogues may be met with leniency. That is extremely disappointing and profoundly unsettling for our community,"

Edward Prutsch, judge at the Ontario Court of Justice in Newmarket, north of Toronto, defended his decision in his reasons for sentencing.

"It is important to be clear about what Mr. Akbari is – and is not – being sentenced for. He is not being sentenced for taking any material steps to act on the threats he made. There is no evidence before me of the collection of weapons,

explosives, maps, planning or coordination.

“Indeed, following his arrest, police conducted extensive checks and searches on Mr. Akbari to ensure the safety of the community was not still at risk. Mr. Akbari’s guilt is based on empty threats he communicated to a stranger, mistakenly assuming (he) would be sympathetic to Akbari’s own warped and hateful worldview. There was no effort to publicize his threats beyond the conversation,” Prutschi wrote.

“That is not to say that the threats were harmless. Mr. Akbari’s threats were clearly motivated by bias, prejudice and hate towards Israelis and Jews. ... Hate-based threats are not just words, they are the gasoline upon which even more serious offences burn. Where hate is normalized, harm follows.”

Akbari was talking with a salesman at his BMW dealership while waiting for an oil change. . . .

He went on to outline his belief that Israel was plotting to exterminate anyone who was not Jewish. He said they deserve deadly punishment.

“Before I go, I want you to remember my name and remember my face,” Akbari concluded the conversation, according to evidence in court, “because the next time you see it, I’ll be on the news. I know when I’m going to die because I’m going to plant a bomb in every synagogue in Toronto and blow them up to kill as many Jews as possible.”



The salesman asked if he was serious. Akbari replied, "Yes, I'm serious. I'll make sure those attacks are filmed and posted online so the world can see what I've done."

The salesman said he was rattled and fearful. The next day, he called the police to report the conversation. Akbari was charged with threatening to damage property and threatening death.

Akbari was found guilty after a trial. He was sentenced Monday.

Akbari was born in Afghanistan and moved to Pakistan when he was around six or seven years old. He stayed in Pakistan for seven to eight years before moving to Moscow, Russia, and, in 2007, moving to Canada. He opened a shawarma restaurant and became a Canadian citizen.

Both Akbari and the car salesman are Muslims who grew up in Pakistan. The judge said that Akbari thought their shared background might give him a sense of comfort with voicing his diatribe.

Crown prosecutors asked for a four-to-six-month jail sentence followed by three years of probation, DNA registration, and a weapons prohibition. Akbari's lawyer asked for a conditional

discharge, meaning a finding of guilt without jail time or criminal conviction.

Prutschi said there was "a terrible twist of irony" in the case.

"The attention his case has drawn has had a devastating impact on him and his family. In a terrible twist of irony, Mr. Akbari's comment during the threats that he would 'be on the news' has come true in a way he certainly did not anticipate."