



Dr. Paul Davenport
President & Vice-Chancellor

February 1, 2008

Professor Michael Lynk
Associate Professor
Faculty of Law
Josephine Spencer Niblett Law Building
The University of Western Ontario

Dear Michael,

Thank you for arranging to meet with me Friday, January 25, with Professors Farah, Heap, Coulter and Carroll to hear, in more detail, concerns you raised in your January 10 letter regarding my decision to stand as the Negev Dinner Honouree for 2008.

The Negev dinner recognizes a person or an institution who has demonstrated leadership and commitment to diversity, tolerance and defending human rights. As I mentioned in our meeting, those are values that make Western a special place in which to learn and work. Those values were part of the Western culture before my arrival here in 1994 and I have done my best to maintain them as an essential part of our campus life. As I stated at our meeting, I am proud to accept the Negev honor because it recognizes a tradition at Western which is very important to me.

A second purpose of the Negev dinner is to support an environmental project, often involving reforestation, water treatment, or rehabilitation of springs and other provision of fresh water. Josette and I will be selecting one that benefits all Israelis.

I understand that the issues surrounding land use in Israel are emotional ones with a long and difficult history. The Jewish National Fund, established in 1901, is part of that history. Israel is a democracy and the issues at hand have been debated openly and intensively by Israeli citizens in recent years. There are strong feelings on all sides of these issues. I do not intend to get involved in a public debate on those issues; nor do I get involved in controversial issues in the many other countries I have visited as Western's President. The issue regarding the land policies of the JNF is before Israel's High Court and it is my hope the matter will be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

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The University of Western Ontario

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Again, thank you for sharing your views with me. Please know that Western and I remain strongly committed to celebrating diversity and promoting tolerance and free speech. It is with these principles in mind that I am accepting the Negev award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'P'.

Paul Davenport

Cc Michael Carroll
Rebecca Coulter
Randa Farah
David Heap