

Canada university drops Lebanese 'terrorist professor'

Carleton University won't hire Hassan Diab, who allegedly killed 4 in 1980 bombing of Paris synagogue.

By Cnaan Liphshiz | Jul.29, 2009 | 9:15 AM

Following harsh condemnations by Jewish organizations, Canada's Carleton University dropped plans on Tuesday to rehire a professor accused of killing four people in the 1980 bombing of a Paris synagogue.

Hassan Diab, 55, had been given a contract to teach a sociology class two days a week until mid August. Diab's lawyer told a court Monday that his client had expected to resume teaching this week.

But the university said that a full-time faculty member "will immediately replace" him, explaining the move was meant to provide students "with a stable, productive academic environment that is conducive to learning," according to a statement. The release also said there would be no further comment on the matter.

Diab, a Lebanese native who became a Canadian citizen in 1993, has been under virtual house arrest since he was arrested late last year. He has been granted bail but under strict conditions, while he's fighting efforts by French authorities to extradite him.

The Canada office of the influential organization B'nai Brith said that the university had done "the right thing" by not letting Diab teach. Before the university statement on Diab, the organization released a statement saying it was "deeply disturbed" by the news that the alleged bomber of the deadly Rue Copernic synagogue will be teaching.

"Canadians should be extremely concerned that an alleged terrorist, accused of committing such heinous acts, will be teaching our youth at a leading Canadian university," said Frank Dimant, B'nai Brith Canada's Executive Vice President.

"We find it deplorable that university officials believe that there is nothing wrong with employing Diab. The safety and security of the community as a whole, and of the Carleton University campus in particular, are of great concern to us."

The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center said it found finds Carleton University's reinstatement of Hassan Diab "shocking." The association's president, Avi Benlolo, went on to call the move "inexplicable, outrageous" and said the university was treating "an accused terrorist mass murderer as if he was charged with drunk driving."