

# TRANSCRIPT

## CBC Radio Daybreak Montreal with Mike Finnerty

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### BLACKLIST FOR NEGLIGENT LANDLORDS

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Next on the program, the City of Montreal wants to publish a blacklist of negligent landlords. Bill 13 is before the National Assembly right now. It would allow the city to publish those names and addresses of problem buildings and their landlords. Here's Darren Becker, who speaks for the City of Montreal.

**DARREN BECKER (Spokesperson, City of Montreal):**

This is mostly for serious problems we're talking about. This is we're talking about if say a building, façade is at risk of falling down, if there's a problem with mold, that there's a problem with vermin, if there's a problem with heat. So these are issues that all affect residents' health and safety, so it's not something we played lightly with.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Daybreak has looked at a number of those problem buildings over the past three years, and here are some of the tenants we've spoken to describing conditions there.

**UNIDENTIFIED (Tenant):**

The shower wasn't working. I had to take a bucket. And then the heat didn't. There was no heat in there. We have to always watch because the roach and the mice is running there. You cannot sleep... you cannot sleep good because when you hear anything you think it is the mice running.

**UNIDENTIFIED (Tenant):**

There's dead birds in the stairwell, the doors are falling off the hinges, there's no fire extinguishers. There's really no upkeep of the building whatsoever.

**UNIDENTIFIED (Tenant):**

I still feel some bite... I kill some... a big one this morning. I would say... I could feel something crawling under my shirt and I just like... and my blouse was red,

big red dot there. So I don't know... But the roaches, I still see a couple of them, but not like before. Before they were all on the wall, they were crawling on the wall. When I turn the light on, because I keep the light off, but when I turn it on it was like... oh, you could see the wall was black with the running up.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Voices from some of the worst buildings in Montreal. Well, Elgard Weisse lives in Côte-des-Neiges. Her landlord also at one time managed the buildings for all of the tenants you just heard from and Elgard Weisse, good morning, thank you for coming into the Daybreak studio.

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Yeah, good morning.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

You've been in your apartment since last June and I understand you still don't have a kitchen. What's the situation?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Well, when I moved in the apartment was supposed to be renovated and after sometime as the renovation didn't go on and it was not ready when I moved in I put in a complaint at the rental board and from that day on what's all the renovation in the apartment stopped and the landlord told me that he didn't want me in the building anymore.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

So once you complained the renovation stopped. Do you really not have a kitchen?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

No, I don't have a kitchen. Finally, it was about three weeks ago the City of Montreal put in a counter and a sink. I didn't have that either. I still have no stove. I just had a fridge, and I got it six weeks after I moved in and it was in full summer.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

The city put in this.

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Yeah, and they sent the bills to the landlord.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

What sort of contact do you have with the landlord?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

None whatsoever because the building has been sold in end of December, and the same day we got the notice that the building had been sold a number of tenants got an eviction notice.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Do you feel that you were punished because of your complaints?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Yes. Yes. Definitely.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

And how does that make you feel?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Well, (laughs) I'm not easy to impress.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

I can imagine. Your landlord, Marc Barchichat also owned and managed, at one time, all the buildings that we referred to, or that the tenants referred to just a few minutes ago. We did ask him to appear on Daybreak. He didn't return our calls. Now, we have no idea whether the city would put him on this list of problem landlords if, indeed, it passes through the National Assembly, the enabling legislation. But what's your opinion? Do you think he should be on a list for people to see?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Oh yes, he should be.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

And what purpose would that serve?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

Well, I mean, when a tenant rents an apartment he normally has not many occasions to inquire about the landlord, where if a landlord normally asks for the financial situation of a future tenant and he can inquire about his relationship with the former landlord. And so when you rent an apartment you do it blindfolded, and you just hope to be lucky.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

I guess the important thing for people like you is, if this list existed would it bring recalcitrant landlords to actually bring their apartments up to standard? Would it help the situation?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Host):**

Well, if they hope to rent it, yes, of course.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Okay, Elgard Weisse, stand by. Thank you very much for joining us. In a moment we're going to speak to a representative from Quebec's largest landlords' association. But before we do that at 22 minutes after seven o'clock it's the latest traffic and public transit with Monique.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

We are talking about a plan by the City of Montreal which requires new legislation before the National Assembly, that would allow the city to publish the names of some of the worst landlords in Montreal. And we have been speaking to Elgard Weisse who lives in a problem building in Côte-des-Neiges, but joining us now is Hans Brouillette who speaks for the CORPIQ (*Corporation des propriétaires immobiliers du Québec*), which is Quebec's largest landlords' and property owners' association. Hans Brouillette, good morning. Thanks for coming in.

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

Good morning.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

What do you make of this proposal to make a list of bad landlords public?

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

Bad landlords, but no list of bad tenants. The City of Montreal, the problem we have with the City of Montreal, the city targets only landlords. Of course, they know their names. They know the address. They know that there is a building and they can be sued. Unfortunately, what we see is the problems in

apartments don't come only from landlords. I would even say that most of the time comes from the bad behaviors of tenants. But this is not taken into consideration by the City of Montreal. The rental board in Quebec who heard complaints from landlords, from tenants, but the City of Montreal just want to look at landlords. That's the problem we have, because the source of the problem can also, and most of the time, come from tenants.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

But you couldn't say, for instance, that the problem that Elgard Weisse's apartment came from her responsibility. It wasn't up to her to put in the kitchen.

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

I'm not going to talk about specific cases, but I understand that when we are looking at major repairs needed in a building and water leaks or severe cases of broken things and... we understand...

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Well why shouldn't those, for instance, be published? I can understand that you might have some concern that some tenants might be responsible for infestation, but what about these problems with major repairs? Why shouldn't those names be public, or addresses?

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

Bill 13 the City of Montreal wants to link the infraction to the building instead of the landlord. That's a good thing. We understand this. The problem with the list we have is that the name of a good landlord, who just cannot do the repairs in the short period of time given by the inspector, or a landlord who says well, this is a major problem, but doesn't come from my responsibility and these names being put next to others of people very well-known for their bad behaviors and attitudes.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Let me play a clip for you from the City of Montreal, and have you respond off the back. This is Darren Becker, who speaks for the city.

**DARREN BECKER (Spokesperson, City of Montreal):**

It's not like it's after a first visit from inspector the name immediately goes onto the website and it stays there forever, kind of like a scarlet letter kind of thing. It's not that at all. If the landlord feels it's the tenant's fault there's room to discuss that. There's room before you get to the... again, this is only meant for repeat offenders, so to speak, who landlords are being repeatedly negligent. So I

think that landlords who are worried about potential quote/unquote abuses of the system for now their fears may be misplaced, because we're not there yet.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Your fears are misplaced.

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

This is not exactly what we heard from our members who have to deal with inspectors who are looking at things like the ceiling must be repainted, the closet must be fixed and things that have nothing to do... nothing to do with safety, security. They go after landlords for other things that should be decided by the rental board instead of the City of Montreal. So what we fear is to see people... we understand that there are major problems in some buildings and landlords who just don't comply to their responsibility, but we fear that other landlords will have their names put next to others and have their reputation being destroyed...

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Sullied, yeah. How big do you think the problem is of bad landlords in Montreal?

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

I would say it's a small problem if we consider the number of buildings. More than 100,000 buildings in the City of Montreal...

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

And do you see it as part of your responsibility as an association to bring those bad landlords into line?

**HANS BROUILLETTE (CORPIQ):**

I think that bad landlords would probably... were probably bad tenants where they were younger, so there are people that... they just don't want to hear about our recommendations and they just want to do their thing the way they want. And there's nothing to do with some people, but they are a minority. Overall, landlords just have to live with their tenants in the same building. They have good relations in the majority of cases and those problems brought to the media or the City of Montreal are a minority for us.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

Okay, Hans Brouillette who speaks for CORPIQ, which is Quebec's largest landlord and property owners' association, thank you very much. Anything reassuring in what you just heard there Elgard Weisse?

**ELGARD WEISSE (Tenant):**

No, nothing to add. I mean, on the whole I agree that the responsibility is on both sides, and so I mean there should be a legal basis, so... on that content.

**MIKE FINNERTY (Host):**

And that is what we... it looks like we're likely to see coming out of the National Assembly. Elgard Weisse, thank you very much for coming in. She lives in Côte-des-Neiges and has a problem apartment that she was telling us about a bit earlier. If you missed the interview you can pick it up on the website later today, [cbc.ca/daybreakmontreal](http://cbc.ca/daybreakmontreal).

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