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Former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney canceled a Canadian speaking appearance because of security concerns sparked by demonstrations during a visit he made to Vancouver last fall.

Cheney was scheduled to talk about his experiences in office and the current American political situation at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on April 24.

But Ryan Ruppert of Spectre Live Corp. said on Monday that Cheney and his daughter Elizabeth had begged off through their agent.

"After speaking with their security advisers, they changed their mind on coming to the event," Ruppert said. He said they had "decided it was better for their personal safety they stay out of Canada."

Last Sept. 26, Cheney was forced to stay holed up in the Vancouver Club for seven hours before it was deemed safe for him to leave. Demonstrators blocked the entrances and at one point scuffled with police.

Cheney critics accuse him of endorsing the use of water boarding and sleep deprivation against detainees while serving in former President George W. Bush's administration.

Before the Vancouver event, Human Rights Watch urged the federal government to bring criminal charges against Cheney, accusing him of playing a role in the torture of detainees.