

# THE CORNWALL PUBLIC INQUIRY

THE HONOURABLE G. Normand Glaude, COMMISSIONER

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## SUBMISSIONS OF THE ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE ASSOCIATION AND ITS MEMBERS

### Phase I

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## **PART I**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The preamble to the Order in Council states:

Whereas allegations of abuse of young people have surrounded the City of Cornwall and its citizens for many years. The police investigations and criminal prosecutions relating to these allegations have concluded. Community members have indicated that a public inquiry will encourage individual and community healing.

Hopefully this Inquiry will provide a significant contribution to that healing process.

2. That healing would include, for some, re-establishing trust and confidence in the ability of public institutions to deal with the issue of sexual abuse of young persons in a competent and sensitive manner. For others, that healing will be achieved in part by having had the opportunity to testify here, thereby sharing their experiences, both positive and negative, in dealing with the public institutions.
3. The Ontario Provincial Police Association (OPPA) has participated fully in Phase One. It is sincerely hoped that the participation of the OPPA has assisted and will continue to assist in the healing process.

4. The members and retired members who have testified before this Commission have tried to be helpful and informative and in that way assist the Commissioner in his fact-finding role.
5. Getting to the bottom of what happened here, in order to give the public a fair and fulsome explanation, is a daunting task. It was made more difficult by the refusal of such a central figure as Perry Dunlop (Dunlop) to testify. The failures of David Silmsler (Silmsler) and Ron Leroux (Leroux) to complete their evidence were unfortunate setbacks.
6. Silmsler made an allegation of sexual abuse to the Cornwall Police Service (CPS) in 1993. No one could have predicted the chain of events that that allegation started, a chain of events that ultimately led to the calling of this Inquiry.
7. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was involved in many of the police investigations examined by this Commission. One issue looked at by the Commission was the training of the OPP personnel that did the actual investigating. It cannot be forgotten that at the time those investigations were carried out there was not any training available that dealt with male historical sexual assault investigations. Investigative shortcomings, if found by this Commission, were most likely due to the lack of training.

8. The investigative steps taken in some of the investigations were also examined. A number of the decisions made were the subject of significant questioning. The officers brought their best judgment to bear on their decisions. Perfection can not be the standard. It has been acknowledged that mistakes were made along the way.
  
9. Project Truth was a large-scale historical sexual assault investigation primarily brought about by the allegations of Dunlop. There were several difficulties inherent in investigating a crime decades after the fact. Project Truth, in addition, had to cope with witness contamination, the dissemination of false information through the media and the withholding of vital information by Dunlop.
  
10. Garry Guzzo (Guzzo) conducted a campaign in the press to enlist support for a public inquiry. He frequently put out information in the public realm even after he knew those facts to be wrong. Those misstatements of facts would lessen the public confidence in the integrity of Project Truth.
  
11. The significant obstacles presented by the interference of Dunlop and Guzzo only served to exacerbate the problems encountered by the investigators.

12. The fact-finding process that has unfolded over the last three years at this Inquiry has been enlightening and undoubtedly informative to the citizens of this community and elsewhere. It has also been in many instances a painful experience for those persons who have been called to testify and relive traumatic events from the past. The emotional reaction of OPP officers in the witness box is proof that police officers are not immune to the tragic effects of sexual abuse in our communities.

13. For those who have followed the proceedings closely it should be readily apparent that the integrity of the officers involved in the various investigations was beyond reproach although not free from human error. The expanded educational and training programs available today will serve to improve the performance of officers.

14. The integrity and dedication of the retired and serving members of the OPPA have served this community well. The improved training that is available today will only serve to enhance the performance of members today and into the future.

15. The recommendations that are offered for the Commissioner's consideration, on behalf of the OPPA are the following:

- i. Expanding the counseling services available for male victims of sexual abuse;

- ii. Consider legislation dealing with a duty to report child sexual abuse allegations to an alleged perpetrator's employer;
- iii. To make counseling available to front-line officers investigating large-scale sexual abuse allegations;
- iv. Officers investigating large-scale sexual abuse cases should be seconded full-time to that investigation;
- v. There should be a dedicated Crown Attorney to large-scale sexual abuse investigations.