

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Regardless of one's previous experience, a newly appointed commissioner of a public inquiry is confronted with a short and steep learning curve. I am indebted to many people who helped me navigate the path, at all stages of the Ipperwash Inquiry.

My judicial colleagues the Associate Chief Justice Dennis O'Connor,¹¹⁹ Justice Denise Bellamy,¹²⁰ Justice Fred Kaufman,¹²¹ Justice Horace Krever,¹²² Justice Murray Sinclair,¹²³ and Justice David Cole,¹²⁴ all of whom had had experience as commissioners of inquiry, offered invaluable advice and perspectives; I was particularly grateful for Justice Kaufman's library of reference material at the outset of my orientation. I also very much appreciated the support and encouragement of my long-time colleagues and friends, the Chief Justice of Ontario R. Roy McMurtry and the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice, Brian W. Lennox.

There are many people, to whom I owe gratitude, who contributed their expertise, skill, and support to this Inquiry. The contribution of some may be acknowledged here more than that of others, but each person's contribution was critical to the work of the Commission. This was a team effort, from start to finish, and every member of the team not only did what was expected of them, they did more. Each person who worked on this Inquiry should feel a sense of pride in a job well done. I simply can't say enough to thank and acknowledge them all.

The public must have confidence in the integrity of the investigation in a public inquiry, and I believe we achieved this, in large measure, because of the skill, integrity, and character of commission counsel and the entire legal team. A stellar team of lawyers organized the evidentiary hearings, led by a seasoned civil litigator, Derry Millar from Weirfoulds LLP. Mr. Millar, together with another experienced litigator, Susan Vella (Goodman and Carr LLP), and an experienced criminal lawyer, Donald Worme (Semaganis Worme and Missens), conducted

119 In his capacity as commissioner, Walkerton Inquiry, currently the Associate Chief Justice of Ontario.

120 In her capacity as commissioner, Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry and Toronto External Contracts Inquiry.

121 In his capacity as commissioner, Commission on Proceedings Involving Guy Paul Morin.

122 In his capacity as commissioner, Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada.

123 In his capacity as co-commissioner, Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba.

124 In his capacity as co-chair, Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System.

an exemplary investigation. Assistant Counsel Katherine Hensel and Megan Ferrier supported them throughout. Jodie-Lynn Waddilove joined us as an articling student and continued for a time after her call to the Bar; Rebecca Cutler replaced her. I also appreciated the assistance of lawyer Bay Ryley for a short time during the summer of 2005, and lawyer Chris Foy and law student Brydie Bethell during the summer of 2004.

We heard a vast volume of testimony over the course of two years of public hearings and the task of analyzing it is daunting. Senior legal analyst Ronda Bessner had preformed a similar role for my colleagues Madam Justice Denise Bellamy and Associate Chief Justice Dennis O'Connor, and she applied the same diligence and professionalism to this inquiry. Ms. Bessner's knowledge of the law, combined with her unique and special writing skills were instrumental in helping me prepare this report. Although only available to varying degrees and at various times, junior legal analysts Erin Stoik, Suzanne Sinammon, Julia Milosh, and Deirdre Harrington conscientiously summarized the transcripts and assisted Ms. Bessner.

Under the thoughtful stewardship of Nye Thomas, our director of policy and research, the Commission isolated and thoroughly explored the many complex issues of relevance to the policy component of my mandate. Mr. Thomas brought his extensive policy and research background to our work and I am particularly grateful for his assistance in helping to prepare the policy volume of the report. Mr. Thomas was supported by policy counsel Noelle Spotton and part-time policy advisor Jeffrey Stutz. Both Ms. Spotton and Mr. Stutz brought considerable experience, knowledge, and sensitivity to the issues requiring attention and analysis.

I am also grateful for the guidance our Research Advisory Committee members brought to our deliberations and analysis: Darlene Johnston, Wally McKay, Philip Murray, Peter Russell, Kent Roach, and Jonathan Rudin. I appreciated the early contributions of Tonita Murray and Earl Commanda, both of whom had to withdraw from the Committee due to other commitments.

Dave Henderson made himself available in the early months as our chief administrative officer. His extensive experience with other recent inquiries and knowledge of Ontario government practices and procedures helped me set off on the right path. Maureen Murphy, manager of finance and operations, was, together with my executive assistant, Debbie Strauss, responsible for the smooth administration of the Commission. Their many years of experience in the Ontario public service were a great asset in creating an administrative structure for the Inquiry. Ms. Murphy came to the Commission on relatively short notice, from the

Office of the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court, and I very much appreciated Chief Justice Lennox's support for this assignment.

I want to express my appreciation to my executive assistant, Debbie Strauss, who assisted me throughout. Ms. Strauss's calm disposition and balanced judgment helped me through some very difficult issues over the course of the Inquiry. I am also indebted to my administrative assistant, Tina Afonso, with whom I also worked at Legal Aid Ontario, and without whom I could not have stayed organized. I am also grateful to my colleague of many years, Tom Mitchinson, who, after retiring from the Ontario Public Service, agreed to serve as a part-time advisor.

A great deal of background work must be done well before the first witness is called to testify, and again in preparing each witness to give evidence. Our lead investigator, RCMP Inspector Rick Moss, and retired RCMP officer Jerry Woodworth, and Toronto Police Detective Sergeant Anil Anand ably and professionally supported commission counsel in this task. I am grateful for the support from the police services for the temporary assignment of the officers.

Legal counsel and the investigators could confidently rely on the extensive document management services of Paul Coort, principal of Coort & Associates. Each of the court reporters, Wendy Warnock, Carol Geehan, and Dustin Warnock from Digi-Tran Inc., provided reliable and accurate transcripts, maintaining consistent quality over the course of the hearings.

Peter Rehak, a proficient journalist with considerable experience in assisting other commissions of inquiry, expertly addressed the Commission's media relations and other communications needs. Our webmaster was Djordje Sredojevic, from Autcon, and Avolution Multimedia, under the direction of Guy Bennett, provided audio-visual support in Forest. They all contributed to engaging the public in the Inquiry, and I am grateful for the care and attention they brought to their tasks.

I would like to thank His Worship Cam Ivey, Mayor of the Municipality of Lambton Shores, and his staff, chief administrative officer John Byrne and administrative assistant Karen Cameron, for accommodating the Inquiry in the Forest Memorial Community and Recreation Centre for almost two years. The on-site assistance of area manager Bill Bentley and the daily attention and support of community centre staff were also essential and greatly appreciated.

Transforming a community centre auditorium into a public inquiry hearing room required much more than adjustments to the furnishings. Our hearing room officer, Ron Hewitt, was attentive to all of the additional considerations, and in a kind and unobtrusive manner. The registrar, George Reeve, undertook his duties with unfailing good humour as well as proficiency, keeping careful track

of over a thousand exhibits. The hub of the administrative wheel in Forest was Susan Beach, who enthusiastically and competently rose to the myriad daily challenges, sometimes under considerable pressure and under conditions unusual for a public inquiry. I wish to acknowledge Ms. Beach's supervisor, Janet Fagan, who supported her secondment.

Under Ms. Murphy's competent supervision, the size of our administrative and legal support team was adjusted to fit the needs of the Inquiry. Grace Goldstein displayed unwavering dedication throughout, and Noreen Gordon, Lynn Dianand, Carolyn Takata, Anne Dancy, Shannon Peterson, Marianne Jacobson, Margaret Barnes, and Aveneil John, who joined us for various lengths of time, each made a valuable contribution. I would also like to acknowledge the guidance of Kathy Genore, manager of finance and administration for both the Walkerton and SARS Inquiries, and to thank the Honourable Mr. Justice Archie Campbell¹²⁵ for sparing so much of her time, particularly during the early months of this Inquiry.

I owe gratitude to my skilled and tireless editor, Agnes Vanya, who was highly regarded and recommended by Justice Bellamy, with whom she had worked on the Toronto leasing inquiries, and to Elizabeth Phinney, who also contributed to this effort. I also appreciated the assistance of Tania Craan and Tom Childs who crafted the design and production of the final report.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the parties with standing, their counsel, the many witnesses who testified, and the experts who shared their knowledge with us.¹²⁶ I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Sam George who attended from the first day of hearings to the last. I believe Mr. George's attendance was an indication of his regard for the inquiry process as a means for getting answers to the questions he had been asking since September 1995. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Mr. Clifford George, who also attended the hearings regularly until his death on September 30, 2005. I know that Mr. George would have liked to have witnessed the end of the process. I hope that if he had been able to read this final report, he would have felt that the inquiry process provided a basis for healing and moving forward.

Those of us involved with the Inquiry could not have carried out our responsibilities without the support of our spouses, families, and friends. An all-consuming assignment, continuing for a significant period and located out of town, necessarily deflects considerable energy from one's personal life. It would be impossible to overstate the importance of the understanding, encouragement, and patience of our families and friends, from beginning to end.

¹²⁵ In his capacity as commissioner, Commission to Investigate the Introduction and Spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

¹²⁶ Appendix 4, Parties with Standing and Counsel; Appendix 6, Witnesses.

Reflecting on the Inquiry team as a whole, I share Madam Justice Bellamy’s observation: “An inquiry team is a bit like a submarine crew, thrown together to work under difficult conditions while weeks stretch into months and then years, submerged in a tightly sealed vessel of confidentiality. It takes a special group of people just to function in that environment, much less excel. Yet my team made excellence seem easy. I owe them an immense debt of gratitude.”¹²⁷

An accurate account of the process of the Inquiry must entail describing the challenges we faced and the scale of hard work demanded of everyone involved. It is important, therefore, to also convey some sense of the immeasurable rewards of the experience. It was an honour and a privilege to have served as commissioner of this Inquiry, and it was a daily joy to work in the company of so many outstanding people who were deeply dedicated to its goals. I hope that the inquiry process itself, the research legacy, and the final report make a positive difference to those whose lives were most directly affected by the events that prompted the Inquiry, and to all residents of Ontario.

127 The Honourable Madam Justice Denise E. Bellamy, *Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry/Toronto External Contracts Inquiry Report*, Volume 1: *Facts and Findings*, at p. 15.

