

IV

The Investigation by the York Regional Police

A. Introduction

As noted in Chapter I, Queensville is a small village located at the intersection of Queensville Sideroad, which runs east and west, and Leslie Street, which runs north and south, within the jurisdiction of the York Regional Police force. While today the jurisdiction of this police force encompasses an area which has a population of approximately 680,000, on October 3, 1984 it was estimated that the population was 240,000. At that time, the York Regional Police force did not have a designated homicide squad or even a major crime unit; there was a ratio of approximately one officer for every 860 residents.

In October 1984, York Region was split into divisions. Nineteen Division (now 1 District) encompassed the area south of Queensville Sideroad and included the Towns of Newmarket, Aurora, King City, King Township, Stouffville, and Musselman Lake. The jurisdiction of 39 Division (now 3 District) extended to those areas north of the Queensville Sideroad, which were less heavily populated, and included the towns of Queensville, Keswick, Sutton, Jackson's Point, Pefferlaw and part of Port Bolster. York Region extends from the northern extremity of Toronto to Lake Simcoe, bordered by Peel Region to the west and Durham Region to the east.

This chapter examines the investigation by the York Regional Police force into Christine Jessop's disappearance. This investigation was turned over to the Durham Regional Police Service upon the discovery of Christine Jessop's body on December 31, 1984.

Two York Regional officers, Constables Rick McGowan and David Neil Robertson, became contentious witnesses for the prosecution at Guy Paul Morin's second trial. This chapter briefly introduces these officers in the context of their involvement in the York Regional investigation. An examination of the role they played in Mr. Morin's prosecution is dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

B. The Missing Person Investigation

(i) The Early Response to Christine Jessop's Disappearance

Upon arriving home from Newmarket on October 3, 1984, Ken and Janet Jessop noticed that Christine had already been home. Her school bag was on the pantry counter and the mail and newspapers had been taken inside the home, as was Christine's usual routine when she got off the school bus. Janet Jessop relaxed briefly, telephoned her husband's lawyer, and then drove to the park to look for Christine. She stopped at the variety store, and also looked for her daughter in the cemetery behind their home where Christine would often play. Ms. Jessop then returned home and made dinner. When Christine had not returned home by early evening, she telephoned the York Regional Police.

Over the next seven hours, approximately 13 police cars, two emergency vehicles and 17 police officers were dispatched to the Jessop residence to assist with the missing person investigation. Fifteen to 20 civilians (notified either by Ms. Jessop or her neighbours that Christine was missing) arrived at the Jessop home that evening to assist in the search for the missing child.

Constable McGowan was the first officer to attend the Jessop residence. He obtained information regarding Christine's description and details relating to her disappearance. There was some discussion as to whether she could have gone to a friend's house or to her grandmother's house which was out of the immediate area. Friends and family of Christine to whom Janet Jessop had not yet spoken were contacted.

Constable McGowan asked the friends and neighbours who began arriving at the Jessop home to lend their assistance by checking the park,

conducting a door-to-door search, or contacting Christine's friends to see if anyone had seen her. He also searched the Jessop premises just in case Christine was simply hiding in the house, as children are sometimes prone to do. As the evening progressed, more officers arrived. Constable McGowan claimed, in testimony given at Guy Paul Morin's second trial, that at approximately 8:30 p.m. he went next door to the Morin house. He knocked at the front door and had a brief conversation, while standing on the Morin porch, regarding Christine's whereabouts. This attendance, together with his alleged observations of Guy Paul Morin at that time, is discussed in some detail later in this Report.

A large truck with very bright spotlights was requested to assist with the search. McGowan asked that a zone alert, outlining the details pertaining to the missing girl, be issued to the other police forces. This alert, which provided a description of the clothing that Christine was last seen wearing and her general physical appearance was issued to the Greater Toronto Area, extending to Hamilton, Durham, Peel, and cities to the north of York Region.

The Jessop home was searched several more times that evening by various police officers. Family members and friends were free to come and go throughout the home.

Inspector Robert Wilson (now Deputy Chief) was called to the Jessop household in the early hours of October 4th. At 1:00 a.m., he attended as the officer in charge of this missing person investigation, and he remained the officer in charge until the investigation was turned over to the Durham Regional Police on December 31, 1984.

Soon after his arrival, Inspector Wilson gave his permission for one of the officers to use his dog as an aid in the search for Christine. Accordingly, Constable Robertson brought his dog, Ryder, to the scene. Inspector Wilson heard nothing about Constable Robertson's dog reacting in any way when it was in the vicinity of the Morin family Honda. In fact, it was not until 1990 that Constable Robertson and his dog became a component of the prosecution's case against Guy Paul Morin. Robertson's involvement is fully canvassed in a later chapter.

Inspector Wilson directed a staff sergeant to take a formal statement from Ken Jessop. At approximately 2:00 a.m. on October 4th, Sergeant Rick McCabe awakened Christine's brother and provided him with some paper in

one of the upstairs bedrooms. He instructed him to write out his recollection of the occurrences and timing of events that day. Ken Jessop was not questioned about any ambiguities or details contained in this statement. This signed statement, which was subsequently lost, was incorporated into a supplementary report. Constable Raymond Bunce (now Sergeant) testified that the informal way in which this statement was taken was in keeping with a missing person investigation, but not with a serious criminal investigation. The extent to which officers conducting a missing person investigation should be mindful of its potential for escalation is a recurring theme of interest in this chapter.

Upon learning from one of his officers that Janet Jessop seemed to be extremely calm under the circumstances, Inspector Wilson warned her that she could be charged with public mischief if she knew where her daughter was or was withholding information. Because Bob Jessop, her husband, was then in jail, some officers thought that Christine Jessop's disappearance could be a ruse to secure his early release. Accordingly, the family's involvement in Christine's disappearance was considered and their actions carefully scrutinized during the initial stages of the investigation.

(ii) Treatment of the Jessop Residence

Christine Jessop was a child of tender years when she disappeared. Her bicycle was lying on its side in the shed, as opposed to the upright position in which she generally kept it. Its kickstand and carrier appeared to be damaged. Her pink jacket, which the Jessops believed she had been wearing that day, was hanging on a hook that was beyond Christine's reach when the Jessops returned home that afternoon.

The Jessop home, however, was not treated as a prospective crime scene. No effort was made during the various searches of the premises to preserve evidence or protect the home from the contamination by those present; no attempt was made to preclude persons from entering certain parts of the house. Indeed, as I have earlier noted, throughout the evening numerous police officers and civilians moved freely inside and outside of the residence.

When Constable McGowan first arrived at the scene, he had noted the placement and condition of Christine's bicycle on the floor of the shed. When another officer arrived at the Jessop household at 8:55 that evening,

Christine's bike was already leaning against the wall of the shed. Inspector Wilson hypothesized that one of the civilian searchers may have moved the bicycle. Clearly, no care had been taken at that time to preserve any fingerprints on the bicycle or maintain the bicycle's location.

Constable McGowan also had noted the location of Christine's pink jacket when he arrived at the Jessop residence; however, when Constable Bunce attended the Jessop household, he observed that the jacket was lying on a table in the hallway. No one could say why the jacket had been moved. Janet Jessop thought an officer had moved it from its hook.

Detective Eric Strong, an identification officer, arrived at 11:55 p.m. to fingerprint the bicycle and to reproduce some photographs of Christine for distribution to the community. He did not attempt to 'dust' the home (and, more particularly, Christine's room) or things that she might have touched, either to preserve her fingerprints or determine if foreign fingerprints were present. This is probably attributable to the status of the investigation at that time. However, the house was not fingerprinted even in the ensuing weeks following Christine's disappearance, despite the growing concerns about her fate. Photographs which the identification officer did take of the bicycle were not even developed until the late 1980s.

(iii) The Later Discovery of the Recorder Fingerprint

It is necessary here to briefly jump forward in time.

After Christine Jessop's remains had been found, a partial fingerprint was purportedly found on her recorder by Sergeant Michael Michalowsky of the Durham Regional Police Service. In an effort to determine if the partial print was that of the child or, possibly, of her abductor, Michalowsky went to the Jessop home on January 8, 1985, in an attempt to lift fingerprints in her room. Because of the passage of time since Christine's disappearance and the adverse effect the room's heat had on the life expectancy of latent fingerprint and palm impressions, Sergeant Michalowsky was only able to lift four very poor partial finger impressions and one partial palm impression (which he later described as "exceptionally good") off of the side of a corner cabinet. He also took photographs on that occasion.

In a January 10, 1985 supplementary report, Sergeant Michalowsky documented his request that York Regional Police obtain the prints of their

officers for comparison and elimination purposes. He was told by Inspector Wilson that the York Regional officers did not touch any of the furniture in the bedroom and, as a result, prints of York Regional personnel could not usefully be compared with the unidentified palm impression. Sergeant Michalowsky noted this in his report:

As a result, their [York Regional] personnel can not be, compared against the unidentified partial palm Impression, since no Elimination Fgpts/Palms are forthcoming.

This branch shall be obliged to await the tendering of 'suspect' or other palm impression for comparison purpose.

Inspector Wilson conceded at the Inquiry that the initial searches of the Jessop household that evening may have involved officers looking under the bed, opening closet doors and large dresser drawers in their efforts to ensure that the child was not hiding in the home. It was, therefore, quite possible that one of his officers had left behind a palm impression or a fingerprint. His comment to Sergeant Michalowsky was based on information from his identification officer that *he* had not entered Christine's bedroom. Inspector Wilson failed to consider that other officers may have touched items in the bedroom during their searches when he spoke to Sergeant Michalowsky.

Had fingerprints been lifted in a timely manner from Christine's personal possessions and her room, they may have been utilized to determine whether the partial fingerprint on the recorder could have been Christine's. As it turned out, the Crown at the first trial was permitted to tender evidence, through Sergeant Michalowsky, that the partial fingerprint did not exclude Guy Paul Morin as the perpetrator (though a positive identification could not be made due to the limited comparison available.) The value of even this limited evidence was later discredited. More about this later.

(iv) Organized Searches

During the evening of October 3rd, and in the days which followed, police organized searches of the area, and many citizens attended and helped. It was estimated that, on the first evening alone, 50 to 70 persons assisted in

the search. *Whatever the deficiencies in the search, police and civilian participants spared no effort and showed great dedication in this task.*

By the early hours of October 4th, a mobile home was set up as a command post at the fire hall on the north side of Queensville Sideroad, east of Leslie Street. This central command area was the focal point where the York Regional Police organized their search for Christine Jessop. It was equipped with a phone line to enable immediate access to any tips, and with typewriters which the officers used in preparing their supplementary reports.

In the days following the disappearance of Christine, citizens arrived at the command post, signed a sheet and then were divided into search groups. Police officers were assigned to specific groups of civilians who then boarded a bus and were taken to designated search areas. They combed through the hilly terrain, ponds, marshes, farmers' fields and bush area looking for the missing child. Police divers searched ponds in the area in the event that Christine had fallen into a pool of water and drowned.

A map of the Queensville area at the command post contained marked-off sections representing the areas that had been searched. These searches were conducted somewhat informally, in that an officer in charge of a search group would come back and verbally report and mark off an area once his or her group had completed its search. No written records were maintained documenting the participants in each group, or the time and location of each group's search.

The organized searches of the surrounding Queensville area concluded on the weekend of October 7th. By that date, the York Regional Police had ruled out that Christine was with family, had gotten lost or had injured herself in the local fields or ravines.

(v) Door-to-Door Canvass of Queensville

The York Regional protocol for missing persons mandated that a house-to-house search be conducted. A search or, in the least, a comprehensive canvass (interview) of every household in Queensville to obtain *and record* detailed information while everything was fresh in the residents' minds would have been of assistance to the subsequent investigation. It ultimately may have been of assistance to Guy Paul Morin as well in memorializing his activities on October 3, 1984 in a timely fashion.

In 1984, Queensville had a population of approximately 700. Inspector Wilson testified that it was not practical to conduct a house-to-house search of every home. The protocol was interpreted to require a search of only the block or half-block within the immediate area of the child's disappearance. The York Regional records do reflect, however, that the entire town was 'canvassed.'

The adequacy of the neighbourhood canvass that York Regional Police performed was the subject of comment by Inspector John Shephard of the Durham Regional Police during the stay motion that preceded the second trial. He testified that while York Regional Police interviewed certain people, it did not do a comprehensive canvass to obtain the necessary information. Inspector Wilson was unable to comment upon the veracity of this statement. He conceded that there had been no canvass sheets completed outlining the people who were present in each home on October 3rd, pinning down their activities, documenting their whereabouts, recording a full description of their vehicles and whether they had seen or noticed anything suspicious. Constable Bunce, later assigned to assist the Durham investigation, confirmed that a door-to-door canvass was done more thoroughly by the Durham Regional officers than by York Regional officers. Unfortunately, this was several months after the disappearance of Christine Jessop when memories had inevitably faded and the trail had grown colder.

(vi) The Evolution of the Investigation

Officially, the York Regional investigation remained a missing person investigation throughout. There is no doubt, however, that, at some point, investigators began to think of it more as an investigation into a serious crime. Testimony varied as to when this change took place. Some stated that the concerns "heightened" the first weekend after Christine's disappearance, after a large search revealed nothing. Others said that it was not until "several weeks down the road" that there was a belief that something extremely serious must have happened. Detective Sergeant John Nechay testified:

[A]fter the search, we knew that something had happened. She wasn't in the general area of Queensville, so, we looked at it more seriously, and then, honestly, in the back of our minds, we knew that something had happened, but what, we didn't know.

As concern heightened, York Regional officers were left with the possibility that this disappearance might involve an abduction, sexual assault, or murder. Detective Sergeant Nechay testified that this possibility would trigger the application and infusion of more resources into the investigation, but he was unable to recall if more officers were, indeed, provided.

Inspector Wilson told the Inquiry that a week or two after Christine disappeared, he knew that there was a likelihood of foul play and that the investigation should be stepped up. While there was no formal acknowledgment that they were now investigating a major crime, as time progressed many of the experienced officers felt that the likelihood of finding Christine alive was slim; even if she was not abducted, hunger and exposure to the elements would have diminished her chance for survival.

Inspector Wilson did reflect that, although there was a period of time where “perhaps you didn’t want to admit it to yourself that Christine ... was in some very serious [trouble],” he felt that the investigation nonetheless involved work by the Criminal Investigation Branch within 24 hours looking into, for example, potential sexual offenders.

The investigation itself took three basic avenues: the first was an evaluation of the Jessop family members as possible suspects. Next was the investigation of potential sex offenders known in the area. The third was the investigation and follow-up of tips from the public. From October to December 1984, York Regional Police force’s attempts to find Christine also included numerous public appeals by way of press conferences, television broadcasts and newspaper articles.

(vii) Findings

The assessment whether a missing person investigation should be converted into a serious crime investigation, with all that the latter entails, depends on the circumstances of each case. Inspector Wilson told the Inquiry that had the situation been considered more seriously as a potential homicide or major crime at the outset, the Jessop residence would have been secured in order to preserve potential evidence. The household would have been fingerprinted and photographed, and timely, detailed and comprehensive witness statements would have been taken from all individuals. Fingerprints and hair samples would have been obtained, which would have avoided the later difficulty that officers encountered once Christine’s body was found.

I understand fully why the York Regional officers treated the situation as a missing person investigation. Queensville (and indeed York Region) was then relatively free of major crime. There had been no previous instance of a child abduction and murder. I am told that there has not been another instance in York Region of a youth being abducted and murdered in the subsequent years.¹ The York Regional Police force received many missing persons reports. Indeed, at present, they receive over 800 missing persons reports every year, about 10 per week involving “youths under the age of majority.” Every missing person investigation cannot be elevated into a full fledged criminal investigation and every home into a crime scene. Further, the Jessop residence did not clearly indicate that a crime had been committed. For example, there were no signs of forced entry. Ms. Jessop’s suspicions were certainly not aroused immediately upon her arrival home.

Having said that, I must nevertheless note that there were circumstances that should have excited suspicion in the mind of a trained investigator that an abduction (though not necessarily a homicide) had occurred. Christine was young. There was no apparent history of a family dispute or turmoil which would explain her voluntary departure that day. There was no suggestion of any difficulty at school. There was no apparent trace of her in a relatively small community. The positioning and damage to the bicycle and the location of her jacket possibly suggested an encounter with an older person.

In my view, the problem here was not that the police characterized their initial involvement as a missing person investigation. The problem was that the officers did not conduct themselves mindful of the *possibility* that they were dealing with a serious crime. As a result, opportunities were missed that ultimately affected the quality and effectiveness of the criminal investigation. Some officers appeared to have a prevailing hope, long after the exhaustive search, that Christine would be found alive. This hope or optimism may have precluded a more detailed and focused investigation.

Any canvassing that was done of the estimated 200 homes was not an in-depth canvass and, in the circumstances, should have been done early in the investigation. Note-taking of interviews was often inadequate. Again, it is

¹ There has been one other missing person investigation that ultimately did become a homicide.

prudent in any missing person inquiry which might conceivably become a major crime investigation to meticulously document and clarify the memories of all prospective witnesses at the earliest opportunity.

The organization and documentation of the civilian searches may not have been perfect. However, the searches were wide-ranging and civilians and police were well mobilized in the circumstances. This aspect of the investigation was largely commendable, particularly given the absence of any prior experience by York Regional Police in conducting such a search.

The York Regional Police Services Board and the York Regional Police Association have recommended certain changes to address how missing person investigations should be conducted where there is a possibility that a serious crime has been committed. The York Regional policies have already been improved to address this very issue. My later recommendations draw upon much that these parties have submitted to the Commission.

C. The Organization and Conduct of the Investigation

(i) Supplementary Reports and Follow-up

Following the disappearance of Christine Jessop, an ‘original occurrence report’ was prepared, outlining the initial information about her disappearance. After that, supplementary reports were filled out by officers who had been given specific assignments. These were typed or handwritten by the officers and they outlined what investigations were conducted. All supplementary reports referred back to the number on the original missing person occurrence report.

The supplementary report forms utilized by the York Regional Police force were standard police forms. On each form were various boxes to identify the author of the report, the date, the officers involved in obtaining and verifying the information in the report, and the further investigation that was necessary. Inspector Wilson stated that for the most part, these boxes, which were designed to assist in the tracking and follow-up of the investigation, were not utilized by the officers. Various aspects of the investigation into Christine Jessop’s disappearance were not even recorded in supplementary reports or in officers’ notebooks.

Supplementary reports were filled out in quadruplicate and were left at the command post for filing during the initial stages of the investigation. Later, when the command post was abandoned, the reports were left at the Criminal Investigation Branch office at 19 Division in Aurora. One copy was filed with the records investigation branch. On the second copy, Detective Bunce or Inspector Wilson would usually make a notation as to whether a follow-up was necessary, and they would retain this copy until the follow-up was completed. As the investigation progressed, Bunce did not get reports back as quickly as he desired. Only then did he begin to write the name of the officer responsible for follow-up on the bottom right-hand corner of the report. (He was unable to say when this change was effected.) A third copy went into the binder that was kept with Detective Bunce at the command post. The fourth copy was a working copy provided to the officer doing the actual follow-up.

A number of failings were associated with the use of these supplementary reports and the follow-up to leads or tips. First, the system for keeping track of which officers were assigned to do what and whether or not they had completed those tasks, was inadequate. Second, there was no real system in place to ensure that work assigned was followed up by officers in a timely fashion. Third, there was no real system in place to prioritize the work that officers were directed to do. As I reflect below, this resulted, at times, in priority being given to improbable leads or tips, and no priority given to important leads. Fourth, there was no adequate system in place to ensure that officers were briefed on the status of the investigation, including what other officers had done. There were no regular, formal meetings of investigators, and while there were briefings, there was no procedure in place to ensure that all officers involved in taking tips and checking out leads were present or otherwise informed of all of the matters discussed at the briefings. There was no adequate system to ensure that all reports were read and processed in a timely way. Inspector Wilson, in charge of reading the reports, said he 'attempted' to read them all. Accordingly, the potential for leads and follow-ups to slip through the cracks was present and, unfortunately, this occurred.

Staff Sergeant Ken Paton, testified at the pre-trial motions that the practice in relation to this investigation was to make notes on pieces of paper instead of recording them in a notebook. After making these notes, the sheets of paper were then turned into supplementary reports. He stated that he had been instructed to do so by Inspector Wilson, but Wilson denied giving such

a direction; no other officers who testified at the Inquiry could recall receiving such instructions.

(ii) Indexing System

The supplementary reports were filed numerically and chronologically. Constable Bunce, who had no previous experience in indexing and maintaining a system for supplementary reports, was given primary responsibility for the maintenance and organization of these records. Bunce testified, however, that he did not initiate the actual system, but simply took instructions from Inspector Barry Delaney as to how the system should be organized.

Supplementary reports were placed into an 'in' tray. The officer would review them, number them, index them and send the various copies out to the respective areas for filing and follow-up.

Reports would be indexed and filed alphabetically under the author's name and under the names of anyone mentioned in the report. There was no index based upon relevant subject matter. *As a result, the indexing system did not permit an officer to search, for example, for all apparent sightings of Christine Jessop, or vehicle sightings, without having the actual name of the author of each report or the name of each person who claimed to have made the sighting. This indexing system was archaic by today's standards, but even in terms of the standards of the day, the system could have been improved by having a manual index of important subject matters contained in the supplementary reports.*

(iii) The Pursuit of 'Hot Leads'

During the first few days of this investigation, there was no one specifically in charge of reviewing tips received from the public to ensure that the 'hottest' leads were followed up on a priority basis. Supplementary reports documenting these leads were put in a holding box for review by officers at a later time. This was particularly unfortunate as the 'hottest' leads are often provided early after a disappearance. Inspector Wilson now recognizes the failure to systematically prioritize and follow up on those leads.

The York Regional Police force protocol for missing persons — a

document designed to guide officers in their investigations — includes the requirement that the last individual to see a missing person must be interviewed.² York Regional Police may have missed an opportunity to do that on a timely basis, given the failings of the investigation. Some examples of the failure to pursue important leads in a timely and effective way are outlined below.

The Horwoods

On October 6, 1984 at 1:00 a.m., an officer of the York Regional Police force received a telephone call from a woman stating that she and her husband had observed a suspicious occurrence. At approximately 4:00 p.m. on October 3rd, Ms. Horwood and her husband saw a male person in a very dirty dark green or blue Buick near the Queensville feed mill. While waiting at an intersection, the Horwoods observed this Buick which was stopped at the intersection facing them. It had been traveling eastbound on the Queensville Sideroad and was waiting for traffic to clear so that it could proceed northbound on Leslie Street. Both Mr. and Ms. Horwood noticed that the male driver appeared to be holding a small child in a forceful manner in the front seat area. They were unable to obtain a licence plate number. A supplementary report was filed by the officer who took this information.

A notation written directly on the supplementary report that this information should be “followed up.” *Despite this fact, it was not until October 18th, some 12 days later, that a follow-up was done by Sergeant Venables.* On that date, Ms. Horwood was personally interviewed for the first time about this sighting. She told the officers that the male driver was slouched down in his seat and appeared to be holding a child with long dark hair in a very forceful manner close to his chest with his right arm, and was driving with his left hand. The Horwoods followed this Buick as it proceeded north on Leslie. The car turned west onto Fieldstone Lane in the Balmoral Heights subdivision. It drove up this street very slowly and close to the curb. The Horwoods were so concerned over what they had seen that they, too, turned into the subdivision and drove slowly around the block looking for the Buick. Unfortunately, by the time they turned into the subdivision they had lost sight of the car and did not see it again. Ms. Horwood estimated that they

² This same protocol now includes the requirement to obtain a statement from this individual, and not just interview them.

first observed this vehicle at approximately 4:05 p.m. They described the driver as male, dark-skinned, mid-forties, stocky with dark hair and grubby in appearance.

On October 21, 1984, three days after this initial interview and 15 days after the original phone report by Ms. Horwood, Mr. Horwood was interviewed for the first time. He was able to provide even more precise information relating to the description of this vehicle. At this time, he stated that the vehicle was “*exactly* like the Buick parked in the driveway of a residence” located nearby, except that the colour had been different. Therefore, the police were provided with very specific information relating to this car — a precise model and year of the two-door Buick Park Avenue. There was no follow-up with the Ministry of Transportation. For example, the Ministry was not asked to provide a print-out of all 1979 Buick vehicles in the area, or the driver's licences or vehicle registrations for all individuals in the area with a similar car in terms of year and colour. It was stated “to be a very large task.” No canvass of the residents of Fieldstone Lane or the Queensville area was conducted to determine if anyone knew or saw someone answering the description of the vehicle or persons observed by the Horwoods. Nor could anyone recall giving instructions to the officers to canvass the Queensville area to look for a vehicle of comparable colour and model.

Unfortunately, by the time Mr. and Ms. Horwood were personally interviewed, they were unsure whether they had observed this vehicle on Tuesday, October 2nd or Wednesday, October 3rd. While they recounted the events clearly, they could no longer pinpoint the day of this occurrence.

This was a strong lead. Despite the fact that the Horwoods offered to undergo hypnosis, this was neither followed up nor authorized by the police. Hypnosis had been undergone by some witnesses, such as Yvette Devine, Guy Paul Morin's sister, who had seen a suspicious car in the driveway at the Jessop residence on the day of Christine's disappearance, in order to help her recall details of the licence plate. No witnesses were able to explain why Mr. and Ms. Horwood's sighting had not been followed up on a timely basis and why hypnosis was not undertaken.

During the Inquiry, York Regional officers conceded that the time between the original tip and the actual follow-up did not look like good police work and was “pretty lax.” Detective Sergeant Nechay stated in this regard:

The resources concerning personnel were limited. We had officers following up information obtained as quickly as possible. That's all I can say about that. If we had more men, certainly we would be going to follow ups a lot quicker.

Newspaper Delivery Person

A newspaper delivery person had delivered a newspaper to the Jessop household on the afternoon of October 3, 1984. In fact, when Ken and Janet Jessop returned home from the dentist, they knew that Christine had already been home as the newspaper had been taken into their home, presumably by Christine. These newspapers were usually delivered around the time Christine got off the school bus, and it was her job to ensure that they were picked up off the lawn and brought into the house. No one fingerprinted the blue plastic wrapper of the newspaper. By the time York Regional officers thought about this possibility, it had long since been discarded.

At the time, it should have been obvious that the newspaper delivery person may have been one of the last people to have seen Christine Jessop alive (other than the perpetrator of the crime) and may have had some useful information.

Ken Jessop provided the name of the newspaper person, his address and his phone number on October 10, 1985 to York Regional police. One of the supplementary reports prepared by York Regional Detective Brian Abraham noted that further follow-up with respect to paper delivery "is imperative." Regrettably, this lead was never followed up. Inspector Wilson testified that this might have been pretty crucial information. It is another example of a follow-up slipping through the cracks.

Mr. T.

The Chief of the Bradford Police Department, John Harrison, was concerned enough to contact Inspector Wilson suggesting that "Mr. T"³ be considered a serious suspect in relation to Christine Jessop's disappearance. He was described as a young person with a criminal record involving sexual offences against young children, was known to carry a buck-knife, and had

³ This person's name was not used during the Inquiry.

worked behind the Jessops' home in the cemetery — a location where Christine Jessop played regularly — as late as July 1984.

The whereabouts of Mr. T. were investigated by York Regional Police. He was quickly 'cleared,' apparently on the basis of information provided by family members who established an alibi for him. When, some years later, an attempt was made to verify this alibi, it was discovered to have been false.

The investigation of this lead was, in my view, less than adequate. I should note that this example is not intended to suggest, in any way, that Mr. T. was responsible for Christine Jessop's disappearance. In my view, a number of individuals were inadequately cleared during the Durham Regional investigation as well — though they have undoubtedly been properly cleared by now.

Low Priority Leads

Numerous reports of sightings of Christine Jessop soon after her disappearance were filed. A number of these reports were of questionable assistance. Many psychics offered their services. One stated that Christine Jessop would be found in a certain body of water. Despite the fact that this body of water had already been searched by police divers, it was searched again. An individual using a dowser or a divining-rod was brought in after one tip.

(iii) The Community Profile

Detective Sergeant Nechay testified at the stay motion that York Regional's position was that every person in the area was basically a suspect until cleared by the investigation. Indeed, Inspector Wilson testified at the Inquiry that this was the public position taken by the York Regional Police. Polygraph tests were administered to some.

However, no efforts were made during the investigation to 'profile the community' by way of an analysis of tax rolls, voting lists, lists of non-resident workers at construction sites, or driver's licence or vehicle searches for the area. Resort to this kind of documentation could enable police to obtain a 'snapshot' of the individuals residing in the Queensville area from October to

December 1984. York Regional Police force did not review occurrence reports for the Queensville area for the years prior to October 1984 to determine what crimes or complaints of crimes had been reported. Detective Sergeant Nechay testified that this is something that would now be done if a serious crime was being investigated. York Region officers did, however, obtain a list of possible sexual offenders, as well as persons associated with pornographic material through the O.P.P.'s Project P.

(iv) The Time that Janet and Ken Jessop Returned Home

Overview

The time that Janet and Ken Jessop returned home on October 3, 1984 was significant, since it helped to determine the time of Christine's abduction. This time gained added importance once Guy Paul Morin became a suspect in 1985. This section of the Report examines some aspects of the way in which York Regional police investigated this issue. The various interviews with Janet and Ken Jessop relating to timing, both by York Regional and by Durham Regional officers are noted in a later chapter, in the context of the way in which Durham officers and prosecutors dealt with the timing issue generally.

The Timing Run

On October 9, 1984, York Regional officers performed a 'timing run' in relation to Ms. Jessop's reported activities on October 3rd. Detective Sergeant Nechay and Inspector Kerrigan accompanied Ms. Jessop as she retraced her steps for that afternoon: attending at Dr. Taylor's dental office on Eagle Street in Newmarket to drop her son off, parking in front of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, walking to the Bell Telephone office, then to Household Finance and to Municipal Savings and Loan, picking up her son at Dr. Taylor's office, and returning home. According to this timing run, these activities took approximately 36 minutes from the time she dropped Ken off to their arrival home.

Bell Telephone

As part of Ms. Jessop's narrative, she stated that she paid a bill at the

Bell Telephone office located on Main Street in Newmarket.

On October 4, 1984, Lois Gibson, a clerk in that office, was contacted by Inspector Wilson to confirm if and when Ms. Jessop attended the office the day before. Ms. Gibson said that Ms. Jessop was there around 4:30 that afternoon. After this conversation, she began to wonder whether she was correct. As she had the impression that this was important, she called the main office in Toronto (which had a record of the date and time of every transaction) to see what time Ms. Jessop had paid her bill. A service representative provided this information to Ms. Gibson, who realized she had been wrong in her 4:30 estimate. Accordingly, on October 5th, she telephoned York Regional Police and asked to speak with the Inspector. As he was not available, Ms. Gibson left the correct time with a secretary at the station. She told the secretary it was very important that this information be given to Inspector Wilson. Her message was misplaced and Inspector Wilson never received it.

Over five years later, in 1990, this came to light. As part of defence counsel's investigation into the timing of Ms. Jessop's activities, Ms. Gibson was contacted. She described her telephone call to Inspector Wilson's secretary. She had presumed that Wilson had received her message. By this time, the Bell records were no longer available; however, Ms. Gibson provided an Affidavit to the defence in March 1990 stating that, as best as she could remember, the business office had told her that Ms. Jessop had paid her bill on October 3, 1984 between 3:30 and 3:45 p.m. The original records would have been valuable in establishing the precise time that Ms. Jessop attended at Bell Telephone. No written record was ever located of Ms. Gibson's message to Inspector Wilson containing the correct time. Inspector Wilson never recorded his original conversation with Ms. Gibson in a notebook or in a supplementary report. The York Regional police did not inquire whether Bell Telephone records could speak to the issue of timing.

Household Finance

Ms. Jessop's narrative also involved a visit to Household Finance. Pamela Watson, who worked there on October 3, 1984, recalled Ms. Jessop's attendance. Ms. Watson testified, as a witness for the defence at the pre-trial motions, that Ms. Jessop glanced at the time and commented that she had to pick up her child at the dentist's office. Ms. Watson was interviewed by two

York Regional Police officers within a few days of Christine's disappearance. Unfortunately, no specific notes or supplementary report were prepared outlining the conversation with Ms. Watson. By the time defence counsel's investigator tracked down Ms. Watson in 1990, the records of Ms. Jessop's attendance had been destroyed. Ms. Watson's best estimate, some five and a half years after the event, was that Ms. Jessop had attended the office between 3:40 and 4:00 o'clock that afternoon. Ms. Watson swore an Affidavit to this effect on March 29, 1990.

This represented a second lost opportunity to precisely ascertain the timing of Ms. Jessop's activities on the afternoon of October 4th. By the time these witnesses were examined in May 1990, their recollections were open to challenge as there was no longer any available contemporaneous record of what had transpired over five years earlier. When Ms. Watson testified that Ms. Jessop's visit was sometime between 3:40 and 4:00, she was questioned by the Crown as to the veracity of her memory. When asked "Is there some reason why it couldn't have been 4:10 or 4:15?", she answered candidly "Not really." Had York Regional Police recorded the statements from these witnesses in a timely fashion, this problem might not have arisen.

(v) Guy Paul Morin

I have already noted that no formal statements were taken from the residents of the Queensville area. In particular, no statement was taken from Guy Paul Morin during the months following Christine Jessop's disappearance.⁴ There was, however, a supplementary report prepared by Detective Sergeant Nechay following some information he received from the previous owners of the Jessop residence on November 2, 1984. The first page of this supplementary report states:

[T]heir son Paul acts weird, however, she would not say in what way this person acted and suggested that we speak to the second house north of the Jessop's, and these people would be able to supply further information.

⁴ At trial, Guy Paul Morin testified that he had indicated to the York Regional Police where he had been that day and when he came home. This evidence was contested by the prosecution at trial.

In Detective Sergeant Nechay's notebook on this date is a notation that this “[s]hould be investigated, as he's never worked and is always home.”

This information was duly filed but never followed up, though Detective Bunce testified that it should have been assigned follow-up investigation. Ironically, follow-up by York Regional Police which scrutinized Guy Paul Morin as a potential suspect might have assisted Mr. Morin much later when he was forced to reconstruct (and try to document) precisely what he had done that day and when.

On December 27, 1985, Inspector Shephard of the Durham Regional Police Service reflected in his notebook that Detective Sergeant Nechay of York Regional Police advised during a meeting that day that he had previously provided Durham with Guy Paul Morin's name as a suspect. Inspector Shephard wrote in his notebook “Ha Ha. Bullshit.” Detective Sergeant Nechay denied that he had ever said anything to this effect. It is unnecessary for me to resolve this issue here.

(vi) Findings

The organization of this investigation in 1984 was flawed. No matter how well qualified investigators may be, an investigation need be structured to ensure that all leads are received, processed in a timely manner, indexed in a way that enhances the investigation, prioritized through the exercise of sound judgment, assigned in an efficient way with ongoing supervision of how and when the assignments are performed and what results they yield, together with regular meetings with investigators to ensure that the ‘larger picture’ can be seen. These things could not be said about this investigation. This resulted in missed opportunities, an inadequate investigation, at times, of potentially significant leads, and a failure to document important information. Inspector Wilson conceded some of these inadequacies and I was impressed by his candour.

As for the resort to psychics and a dowser, it has been said that no lead is too small to investigate. However, in the face of the important leads that were not investigated, these simply highlight the investigation’s lack of prioritization at times.

I cannot say, of course, whether the outcome of the investigation would have been different had the investigation been differently conducted.

Would the true perpetrator have been apprehended? I do not know; nor does anyone else.

Having said that, I recognize that there have been significant changes in the organization and conduct of an investigation since then. The York Regional Police Services Board, drawing upon the evidence heard during Phase III of the Inquiry, made this submission:

As a result of dramatic improvements in technology and available resources, the ability of the York Regional Police to investigate major crimes has increased significantly since 1984. Officer Nechay was asked about these resources:

Q. Let me put it to you very simply: In your view, at least, were you satisfied that at time, resources were sufficient to handle the case load?

A. No.

Q. All right. In the years since then, have things changed in terms of resources?

A. Yes, the technology is improved vastly, we now have a major crime unit. We have an emergency response unit that's been trained to conduct search areas, so things have improved since then, greatly.

The most significant single advance in available resources has been the tremendous progress which has been made in computer software capabilities since 1984. Case management software with sophisticated search capabilities was not in use by police services in 1984 because the technology simply did not exist in its current form. Today, the York Regional Police have a computer system equipped with a case management software which automatically flags follow-ups on supplementary reports. Reports can be prioritized as they are inputted and the computer system will immediately bring any delays in following up on a report to the attention of the officer in charge of an investigation.

In conjunction with computerized case management software, the York Regional Police now have a computerized system for creating supplementary reports which allows for direct voice entry. That is, police officers can call into the York Regional Police records investigation branch and have their reports transcribed directly into the force's computer system by the office personnel of that branch. This system eliminates the delays which were inherent in the creation and dissemination of manually-created reports.

The York Regional Police now have a Major Crimes Unit with the resources and trained personnel to respond to situations which are deemed to be major crimes.

The York Regional Police have established a canine unit and incorporated it into major crime investigations.

Although the York Regional Police established an excellent liaison with the various media outlets from a very early point in the Christine Jessop investigation, their ability to do so in future investigations has since been improved by establishing a full-time media officer who receives relevant training in the area. [Citations omitted.]

I accept that these changes reduce the likelihood that a number of the failings identified by me would recur.

One issue raised with me has been the adequacy of training and resources (other than technological) available to York Regional police officers. My recommendations address this issue.

D. Transfer of File from York Region to Durham

Between October 3, 1984 and December 31, 1984, York Regional Police officers prepared approximately 900 supplementary reports documenting their investigation.

On January 2, 1985, Detective Bunce gathered up the York Regional

binders and index books containing all supplementary reports of York Region and turned them over to the Durham Regional Police Service in Sunderland. York Region assigned an officer to assist Durham in the transfer of these files. A comprehensive discussion of the transfer of files and the issues arising from this transfer (relating to the use of the York reports) follows in the next chapter.

Two York Regional officers were seconded to assist Durham Region in its investigation up until April 22, 1985, when Guy Paul Morin was arrested. Officers Bunce and Nechay received their instructions from Inspector Brown at Durham or the detectives investigating the case. The two police forces also maintained ongoing contact in 1985.

E. Recommendations

Recommendation 70: Missing persons investigations

(a) Officers conducting a missing persons investigation must remain mindful of the possibility that such an investigation may escalate into a major crime investigation. This means, in the very least, that an accurate and complete record be kept of statements taken from relevant persons. This may also mean, under some circumstances, that potential evidence be immediately preserved from removal or contamination. It is inappropriate to direct, as a rule, when a missing persons investigation should be treated as a major crime investigation. This decision need remain within the discretion of the investigating or supervising officer.

(b) Police officers should be trained on how to respond to a missing persons investigation, where the possibility exists that such an investigation may escalate into a major crime investigation. Such training should draw upon the lessons learned at the Inquiry.

(c) The York Regional Police force's operating procedures have been amended to respond to the concerns raised by the Christine Jessop investigation. The Ministry of the Solicitor General should facilitate the creation of similar operating procedures for all Ontario police forces.

These recommendations largely track those made by the York

Regional Police Services Board and the York Regional Police Association.

The amended operating procedures for missing persons investigations contain these specific directions:

- ☐ Members shall be cognizant that a missing persons call may at some time become a crime scene. It is imperative that detailed notes and diagrams are made by officers attending the call.
- ☐ Obtain statement from reporting person in case criminal activities are later suspected.
- ☐ Record in memo book areas searched, diagrams of areas and persons who searched specific areas.
- ☐ If necessary, request Canine Unit assistance.
- ☐ Request a zone alert.
- ☐ Contact Public Affairs.
- ☐ Maintain a file on search-to-date actions.
- ☐ Have Command Post attend the scene.
- ☐ Liaise with Investigative Personnel during the investigation.
- ☐ Hold a debriefing session with parties involved in incident. Make recommendations on methods to improve search techniques. Forward report to Operations Commander. Review entire search effort to ensure that all reasonable efforts were made to locate the missing person.

The York Regional Police Association also noted this:

Despite any proposed changes respecting the procedure in missing persons investigations, adequate training to

teach officers how to recognize the signs and factors used in assessing a situation must be made mandatory. Without such training, any recommendations the Commission makes in this area will not be practical, nor will they be effective.

Recommendation 71: Conduct of searches

(a) Searches conducted during a missing persons investigation should be supervised, where feasible, by a trained search co-ordinator.

(b) Searches should generally be conducted in accordance with standardized search procedures, taking into consideration the particular circumstances of each case.

Again, this recommendation largely tracks the proposal of the York Regional Police Services Board. I do not intend to define further the appropriate procedures. This is better left to those with expertise in such searches. The York Regional Police Services Board proposed that the following measures could be prescribed whenever major searches are undertaken:

- The search should be co-ordinated by a single officer, who should direct all officers and participating civilians in order to ensure that the search is conducted in an orderly fashion.
- Each person participating in a search should be required to register at a central location where they would be required to provide their name, address and telephone number. It may be advisable to openly operate a video recording device at the volunteer registration table in order to assist with this process.
- Each volunteer should be assigned to a team of searchers consisting of not more than fifteen persons, with each team being assigned a police officer as team leader.

- The area to be searched should be marked out in a grid fashion and the search co-ordinator should direct each team leader to search a specified portion of the grid. The names of all individuals involved in searching each portion of the grid should be recorded.
- Searchers should be advised that any items located which may be associated with the missing person should not be touched or moved and should immediately be brought to the attention of the team leader. Each team leader should be equipped with a portable radio or telephone in order to notify the search co-ordinator of all such items found, and identification officers should be dispatched to examine, collect and catalogue the items in order to ensure that they are properly preserved as possible evidence.
- The search co-ordinator should ensure that all search team leaders submit detailed reports indicating the areas searched, any items located therein, and any relevant observations or unusual occurrences. The search co-ordinator should then ensure that the areas searched are marked off on a map of the overall search area.
- The search co-ordinator should be responsible for keeping the case manager apprised of the status of the search, any items which were found or information which was discovered.

Recommendation 72: Skills, Training and Resources

During this Inquiry, the York Regional Police Association expressed deep dissatisfaction over the lack of training and resources available to its membership. I was advised that the Association supported the need for an audit of the police force. The audit was filed as an exhibit at this Inquiry. It revealed matters of significant concern. This is what the Association had to say:

SKILLS AND TRAINING

22. It is unfortunate that lack of experience and training may have affected York Service's approach to the Jessop case. However, more alarming is the fact that the skills and training of the members of the York Service have not substantially improved since that time.
23. Although some procedural changes have been made for missing persons protocol, no real change to improve the skills and the training of the officers have been made since the time of the Jessop missing person case. Nor has there been any real improvement to the resources and the technological equipment made available to York Service officers.
24. In the fourteen years since the Jessop disappearance, Durham Region appears to have responded to the need for better training and skill development, and have actually implemented programs and designated resources and budgets to improve their training programs and facilities. In York however, although the population has grown exponentially, the York Service has not implemented any significant changes to their training program or kept up with the growing needs of the community for specialized units.
25. The YRPA has always been concerned by the lack of resources and training that has been made available to its membership. It has continuously lobbied for a larger training budget and more training programs to be made available to the officers. The York Service has not responded positively to requests for better training, and in fact have actually reduced the budget for training.
26. The YRPA has requested computer equipment and better technology to assist officers in their investigations. For many years, York Service did not provide or upgrade the equipment, leaving the officers at York Service with little or no ability to efficiently operate their investigations. Recently, they have significantly improved their computer system.
27. It was due to this lack of changes in training and

equipment that the YRPA requested and ensured that an audit of the York Service be conducted under the *Police Services Act*. They requested the audit in order to prompt some action by York Service to improve the state of training and other procedural deficiencies in the force. The Inspection Report of the York Regional Police Service dated May 1997 (“the Audit”) are the findings of the Police Services Advisors after conducting a three month on site inspection of the state of the operations and practices of the York Service. With respect to the training and technology for York Service, the Audit states,

“Notwithstanding [the] overall assessment of policing at the front line, there are a number of critical issues that need to be addressed. **Primary amongst these is the need for additional resources in certain specialized areas of service. ... a need to address the allocation of existing resources. ... [t]echnological upgrades are also urgently required.**”

28. The specific findings about training were even more critical. The only positive comment that the audit had regarding training was in relation to York Service's Firearms Training facilities which were “state-of-the-art” and the Use of Force Training programs.
29. It is highly significant that the one area of training in which York Service received a positive review is also one of the few areas in which there are mandatory provincial standards. Clearly, the only way to ensure adequate and up-to-date training is to create mandatory provincial standards.
30. The balance of the auditors' findings were negative, including the finding that the Training Branch was poorly trained and inadequately funded.

“A training needs strategy should be developed with appropriate resources provided by the Police Services Board to

ensure its goals are met. It is essential that the trainers themselves are provided with appropriate training.

.....

The Training Branch is responsible for the delivery of all mandated training as well as courses selected by the administrator of the Police Service. ... Members assigned to delivery of academic subjects ... do not feel that they have been provided with appropriate formal training/education, to effectively deliver some courses of study. ... Additionally, concern was expressed ... that they are inadequately funded and **that training is generally not a high priority with the management of the police force.**"

31. The Audit also found that the Training Branch was "**inadequately equipped, and that much of the resource material is outdated.** Members of the branch were unaware of the Ministry Policing Standards (except Use of Force) although they were required to teach subjects that are covered by the standards." Further, the audit found,

"Of particular concern to the members of the inspection team is the apparent *reluctance* to send members of the Police Service to accredited courses at the Ontario Police College and Canadian Police College. Records at the Ontario Police College revealed that few members of York Regional Police force have attended accredited courses *unless mandated.*"

32. In fact, the audit found that any upgrading of qualifications was self-initiated and self-funded by individual officers and not by the York Service, as no resources were budgeted for self-initiated programs. For the YRPA the finding by the audit that, "**appropriate training is perceived by the members to be a *luxury* because of fiscal**

constraints” speaks volumes about the inability of York Service to provide adequate training in the absence of mandatory provincial standards.

33. It is unacceptable that training be considered a luxury. Training is a necessity and an essential part of the proper development of a strong force. Proper budget allocation and the importance of training must be emphasized by the Commission. Further, it is not sufficient to simply make recommendations, mandatory standards must be set and enforced to ensure compliance by management. Past experience has demonstrated that there is no assurance that positive changes will be made without the establishment of mandatory provincial standards.
34. The YRPA places significant emphasis on their submission that the Commission recommend mandatory provincial standards since it is clear that in the absence of such standards budgeting and other factors may result in the continued inadequate training of officers. If training is not mandated, no money will be made available for it, as training is always one of the first expenses which is cut from the budget.
35. If we rely only on Police Services Boards to decide what priority they will place on training, then, without mandatory guidelines and standards, there will be no uniformity in the skills level and the service of police forces across the province. The difference between the Durham Service and York Service approach to training is a perfect example of what can happen in the absence of mandatory provincial standards.
36. Waiting for all the stakeholders to develop their own standards is also not a plausible alternative. In the most recent attempt to develop Adequacy and Effectiveness standards, the Solicitor General, Attorney General, Senior Officers Association and the Police Association of Ontario were all willing to meet and discuss the setting of standards. However, the Chiefs of Police and the Police Service Boards, the very people who would implement the programs, walked out of the

discussions stating that they could not agree to the standards being negotiated. They cited budgetary issues as the key reason that they were walking out of the consultations.

37. The YRPA is afraid that nothing will change unless the Commission recommends and the province implements mandatory provincial standards. The audit is a perfect example of what will happen to recommendations for change that are not mandatory. The Audit resulted in 65 recommendations for change and improvement in the force. To date, there have been significant improvements in the areas of computerization and technology. However, there has been little change with respect to the provision of training.
38. The YRPA is aware the budget limitations are a major barrier to improvements. Provincial funding cuts continue to force the Police Services of this province to find ways to cut their budgets. This cannot continue to happen. In order to ensure that the implementation of mandatory provincial standards for training does not affect or compromise other essential police services the Commission must also recommend that additional provincial funding accompany the changes to training.
39. The people of Ontario cannot afford to have police forces learn by experience. This is an ineffective and dangerous method of ensuring police have the proper skills and abilities to perform their duties. The only way to guarantee that police receive proper training is to set mandatory provincial training standards.
40. As such, the YRPA urges the Commissioner to make positive recommendations for new mandatory provincial standards for training and resource allocation in order ensure that police forces across the province are properly trained, in both basic and specialized techniques, and that they have the proper equipment and resources available to them in order to provide adequate and effective policing. The failure to create such standards would permit the status quo to continue.

If the status quo continues, this inquiry will have failed to serve a useful purpose.

41. The YRPA recommendations on skills and training include:

R1. That the Provincial government set mandatory provincial standards respecting the training of officers which set adequacy and effectiveness standards that all police services must meet; and, that the province ensure that necessary funding is available to enable police services to comply with these standards.

R2. That mandatory provincial standards include yearly courses in basic skills and procedures to be taken at designated sites, including the Ontario Police College or the Canadian Police College, and if necessary accredited international centres.

R3. That mandatory provincial standards require that each police service have specialized units in identification, scene of crime, homicide and missing persons and that mandatory goals be set for the year 2000 for the numbers of trained personnel which should be available in each unit. (Citations omitted.)

York Regional Police Services Board also addressed the training and resources issue:

Criminal investigative techniques are constantly evolving, and it is important for all police services to have competent, well-trained officers carrying out the duties which have been assigned to them. Training should be viewed as an ongoing process, and should continue after an officer has become an investigator to ensure that all officers are kept up to date on new laws, procedures, investigative techniques and police technology. However, such training comes at a cost, both in direct financial terms and in terms of the lost officer time which occurs while the training is taking

place, and these costs can discourage police services from undertaking as much training as would otherwise be desirable. As noted in the Campbell Report, when police budgets are pruned, training is often the first thing to be cut.

The most direct way to improve police training would be to expand the province-wide minimum training requirements which are established by the Ministry of the Solicitor General. These standards could include mandatory training requirements for officers assigned to specified duties, as well as individual service minimums in terms of the number of officers who must be trained for certain specialized purposes. However, minimum training standards should not be set without ensuring that police services will be able to meet those standards without compromising other aspects of their operations. In particular, actual criminal investigative resources should not suffer because of increased training requirements established by the Province. One way to ensure that this does not occur would be to accompany such increased minimum training standards with additional provincial funding which is earmarked for such purposes, as is currently done for other policing matters assigned a high level of priority by the Province, such as the provincial R.I.D.E. program.

In a later chapter I recommend that the Province of Ontario enact minimum policing standards in a number of areas. Here I need address the additional concerns raised by the York Regional Police Association. The lessons which may be learned from this Inquiry by police officers will mean little if the rank and file police officers are not taught them. The practices and procedures recommended by me in this Report will mean little if officers are not trained in their use. The dangers identified in the conduct of police investigations will have been identified for nothing if officers remain unaware of them.

(a) Rank and file officers need be educated and trained on a continuing basis on a wide range of investigative skills. Their educators need themselves be fully trained in these skills and in their communication to others. Financial resources need be available, secure from erosion for operational purposes, to ensure that training for all Ontario police forces is state-of-the-art.

(b) Attention should be given by the Government of Ontario, on a priority basis, to the specific concerns identified by the York Regional Police Association and the audit of the York Regional Police force. The Government of Ontario should publicly announce the measures being taken to address the concerns raised.

The Ontario public, and the people of York Region in particular, have been told by the York Regional Police Association, representing the officers of that region, that their situation is ‘alarming’ and that their skills and training have not significantly improved in the last 15 years, despite their own motivation for improvement. I am in no position to evaluate how the York Region police officers compare to other Ontario jurisdictions. However, an ‘alarm bell’ has been rung in York Region. The public must have confidence that the bell will be answered.

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