

MISSING
WOMEN
COMMISSION OF
INQUIRY

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July 14, 2011

BY EMAIL

Mr. Alex Neve
Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Avenue East
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Mr. Doug King
Pivot Legal Society
103-119 West Pender St
Vancouver, BC V6B 1S5

Mr. David Eby
B.C. Civil Liberties Association
550-1055 West Georgia St
Vancouver, BC V6E 42A

Dear Sirs,

I write in response to your letter of June 30, 2011 to Commissioner Oppal. Mr. Vertlieb, Senior Commission Counsel is away and this has delayed a response from him. In the meantime I thought that I would take the opportunity to clarify several important issues that you raised.

I note what seems to be an overarching issue with respect to the *“Peel Regional Police **embedded** with Inquiry staff”* (emphasis added).

We can assure you that the Peel Police Officers are not imbedded with Inquiry staff. They are not “involved in the day-to-day activities” of the Commission as you have suggested.

They have been engaged to provide the Commission with an expert opinion on the conduct of certain police actions by various police agencies in BC as detailed in our Terms of Reference (“TOR”). This expert evidence will be contained in a report authored by Deputy Chief Evans with assistance of her staff.

I will now address some of your other specific points:

- As an expert witness, the evidence of Deputy Chief Evans will be brought forward “on the stand, in public.” She will be providing her opinion of what “business is usual and what is unusual business”. There will be nothing secret about her work as you have suggested and she will be available for cross examination.
- The Dziekanski and Paul inquiries may not have required the services of full time police experts. However, the amount of expert time that is required in this matter is simply a function of the magnitude of the events in our TOR compared to the other incidents that you have referenced. In Dziekanski and Paul the durations of the events were minutes and hours

respectively. They did not occur over many years; involve several police agencies and hundreds of potential witnesses as is the case here.

- We, like you “have no reason at all to question the integrity of the particular officers who have been seconded to the Commission...” In fact, the experience of Deputy Chief Evans and her staff is important to the significant credibility they bring to the expert opinion we require. During her career DC Evans has been:
 - a homicide investigator,
 - the officer in charge of a homicide department,
 - seconded for the review of the Bernardo serial criminal investigation in Ontario, and
 - is now a senior police officer familiar with the utilization of scarce resources and the management of differing priorities.

- We believe this makes her well qualified to provide the opinion evidence that we are seeking.

Lastly, I assure you that the inquiries of DC Evans are independent of commission staff work and they are not impairing the Commission’s independence.

As I stated above, we are grateful to have her assistance and as always, I thank you for your ongoing interest in the work of our Commission

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Boddie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Boddie
Executive Director

cc Deputy Chief Evans