

PRESS ADVISORY

OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT FINDS S.I.U. PLAGUED BY POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

SCHAEFFER/MINTY FAMILIES SPEAK OUT ON REPORT

December 14, 2011

Today, the Ontario Ombudsman released a report entitled "Oversight Undermined" which revealed the ongoing failure of the Attorney General to implement the Ombudsman's recommendations (made in September, 2008) and documented the extent of political interference in the Ministry's supervision of the S.I.U. The Ombudsman's report refers extensively to the Schaeffer/Minty families and their battle for justice against police undermining of S.I.U. investigations. The Court of Appeal decision in their case along with the Ombudsman's Report can be found under "what's new" at www.falconercharney.com.

Ruth Schaeffer, the mother of Levi Schaeffer, commented: **"My family and I have worked hard to ensure that police officers co-operate with S.I.U. investigations. It is now time for the Attorney General to make the public, including families like mine, a greater priority than protecting the police agenda. Hopefully the Ombudsman's recommendations will not again fall on deaf ears"**

Evelyn Minty, the mother of Douglas Minty, reacted to the Ombudsman's report: **"We will never have confidence that we know all the facts that led to my son's death. This is something that our family will struggle with for the rest of our lives. We are now learning for the first time that the Ontario Government was more concerned with appeasing police interests by suppressing what should have been a public report by Director Scott. It really shakes our confidence in police accountability in this province."**

Trial lawyer Julian Falconer, who acts for the two families, stated, **"The Attorney General Chris Bentley's improper suppression of what should have been a public report must be the subject of an immediate and full explanation by the Premier. Had the Schaeffer and Minty families had access to this report it most certainly would have been filed in their Court proceedings and there can be no doubt that the police and the government knew this. We are no longer concerned with simply the appearance of a conflict of interest between the government's loyalty to police and its supervision of S.I.U. This political interference is proof positive that protection of the police takes the greater priority for this government and that SIU needs to operate independently of these ministries."**

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