

Responses To Allegations Of Child Sexual Abuse In Cornwall Often Inadequate: Commissioner Glaude

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December 15, 2009 — There is no shortage of criticism in the final report from the Cornwall Public Inquiry. Commissioner Normand Glaude released the nearly 2,400 page document earlier today. He says institutions failed in how they dealt with allegations of sexual abuse. In his findings, Mr. Glaude says the O.P.P.'s 1997 investigation dubbed "Project Truth" into whether a pedophile ring operated in the Cornwall-area was too narrow. He says the provincial police were not able to "reliably" say whether there was an organized group abusing young people or not and if that alleged group misused their positions to cover it up. (Hear audio clip below) The commissioner does admit there are connections between some of the alleged perpetrators and some evidence that some alleged victims had been passed around between abusers. But he says the conspiracy may have been fueled by the local police response to a \$32,000 illegal settlement between former alter boy David Silmsler and the Diocese of Alexandria-Cornwall. The allegations were unearthed when former city police officer Perry Dunlop turned the case file over to the Children's Aid Society. The report notes a long list of "errors of the past" by institutions including the Children's Aid Society, police forces, school boards and government ministries. Commissioner Glaude says the way institutions responded to allegations of historical sexual abuse was in large part inadequate.

Audio clip transcript:

“Ontario Project Truth concluded Project Truth by saying there was no paedophile ring in Cornwall. Since they did not investigate this they could not have reasonably come to this conclusion. This does not mean that I find that there was a ring of paedophiles. It is not in my role to make such a finding, but I do find that no investigation provided conclusive evidence on this point.”