

## Morris, Pat (OPP)

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**From:** Morris, Pat (OPP)  
**Sent:** 22-Feb-22 3:44 PM  
**To:** Cox, Chuck (OPP)  
**Subject:** Freedom Convoy and the OPP

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Deputy Cox,

I believe that law enforcement in this country is at a critical stage in terms of its ethics, its operational independence and its decision-making. This is a position that some law enforcement agencies have found themselves in at previous historical junctures – the FBI in the 1950s and 1960s, the RCMP in the 1980s and the law enforcement community generally following the events of September 11, 2001. In most cases, subsequent inquiries illustrated knee-jerk, overarching reactions. These “transition points” often result in significant inquiries – and these venues enforce scrutiny. In my opinion, the issue of the Freedom Convoy is the catalyst for this current tenuous position/situation. For me, the most critical component is how we, as a profession, move forward ethically and justly in terms of how we serve and how we lead. Having said that, I am concerned about how events are evolving and the speed of that movement. I believe that we need to consider how best to move forward in a sober, methodical manner. Stating my opinion is a matter of integrity – and it is something I must do.

I am highly cognizant of the information gathered in relation to these events, the intelligence produced, the intelligence disseminated and the actions taken or not taken. I am also acutely aware of the impact of these actions and inactions – i.e. Ottawa. I have played a lead role in pro-actively guiding law enforcement action in relation to its collection of information, production of intelligence and discussion with intelligence partners. I have also heard some police leaders make outlandish, inaccurate claims about the activity that has occurred – these claims were not based in any intelligence or evidence that I am privy to.

Further, I have witnessed the attentiveness and engagement of many persons evolve from virtually nil to significant involvement. This alteration in engagement has occurred with an increasing degree of ‘expert status’. But, many of these discussions are far from expert - they are highly politicized, hyperbolic, self-serving and overwhelmingly informed by media editorials. This sensationalism is leading to a quickening pace of decision-making, and public discourse, in terms of what should, and should not, occur. By way of example, I see a marked increase in the conversation of extremists participating in these events – and Canadians with extreme ideologies leading the charge. Although there are exceptions, I have not seen the evidence of this – in fact, HENDON received and reported very little of this activity. It was not in evidence at the Ambassador Bridge nor events related to the Bluewater Bridge. Further, the events in Toronto did not illustrate this. By way of example, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service had very little to report on - and noted that their targets were not engaged. INSET reported that the activity did not meet their threshold in national security. So, I do not know where the political figures are acquiring information or intelligence on the extent of extremist involvement.

The issue has become deeply politicized and political figures and polarized media cite sources of extremism as the prime catalyst – but there are significant difference between seeing political dissent or opponents as “extreme” (a highly subjective measure) and the legal connotations of ideologically motivated violent extremism or terrorism. It is not for me as a police officer to approve or disprove the need for overarching legislation. But, the highly controversial, unprecedented powers to deal with these issues will be subject to significant scrutiny. Organizations that in no way, shape or form would agree with the recent illustrations of dissent (i.e. the Canadian Civil Liberties Association) are heavily critical of the activity currently underway.

I have consistently viewed see this movement as a political entity amalgamated by opposition to several factors (i.e. vaccine mandates among others). It is an entity that feels marginalized in its locality but enhanced by its broad appeal

nationally – hence its desire for a centralized display of its perspective. It is not an “extremist” movement. It is not comprised of Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremists (IMVEs). The actual leaders are not violent extremists with histories of violent criminal acts – although events due attract unpredictable and extreme elements. The absolute lack of criminal activity across Canada, and the minimal violent crime throughout the event illustrate this.

But now the public discourse is dominated by political figures and the media – and the commentary is providing a very different picture than what law enforcement collectively gathered. It is painting a different picture – it speaks to extremism, it offers parallels to terrorism, it speaks of sedition. I am sending this email because I feel that we are at a turning point. It is time to calmly continue gathering information, understand what we are dealing with and monitor intentions and actions for criminal activity and public order implications. To that extent, I am committed to an intelligence probe to discern what intelligence / evidence can be obtained of criminal offences.

You may ask why I am sending this: I am deeply concerned for the role of contemporary law enforcement and balance in the application of the law to our citizenry. I introduced these matters to several police audiences over the last two weeks with the need to be apolitical, objective and to view the events in context. Our province, our country and our police service, of which I am exceedingly proud, have witnessed illegal occupations, blockades and destruction of infrastructure, mixed with violent offences and significant economic impact, as well as the acquisition of funds via social media for the furthering of this activity and the defense of the perpetrators. In those instances too, I have asked for a considered approach to these divisive events – via the MIMG and other mechanisms. Ultimately as well, I wish personally and professionally to assist my organization and my profession in charting an ethical approach to deal with these matters and to work to remediate and reconcile the deep divisions that they emanate from.

Pat

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