

Moorhead is guilty, told to quit police

John Moorhead's outside business interests led him to commit offences that cost him his job as a police officer, a judge ruled in Toronto on Friday.

Declaring that Staff Sgt. Moorhead's denials "cannot be believed", Judge Hugh O'Connell linked the policeman's downfall to his involvement in two businesses operated by former York Regional Police officers.

Staff Sgt. Moorhead was found guilty of providing confidential police information to one of those ex-officers, former Thornhill businessman Douglas Sheldrake. Judge O'Connell ruled that the policeman must resign within seven days, or be fired.

Police Chief Bruce Crawford placed Staff Sgt. Moorhead on leave of absence immediately after the judge announced his decision at noon last Friday.

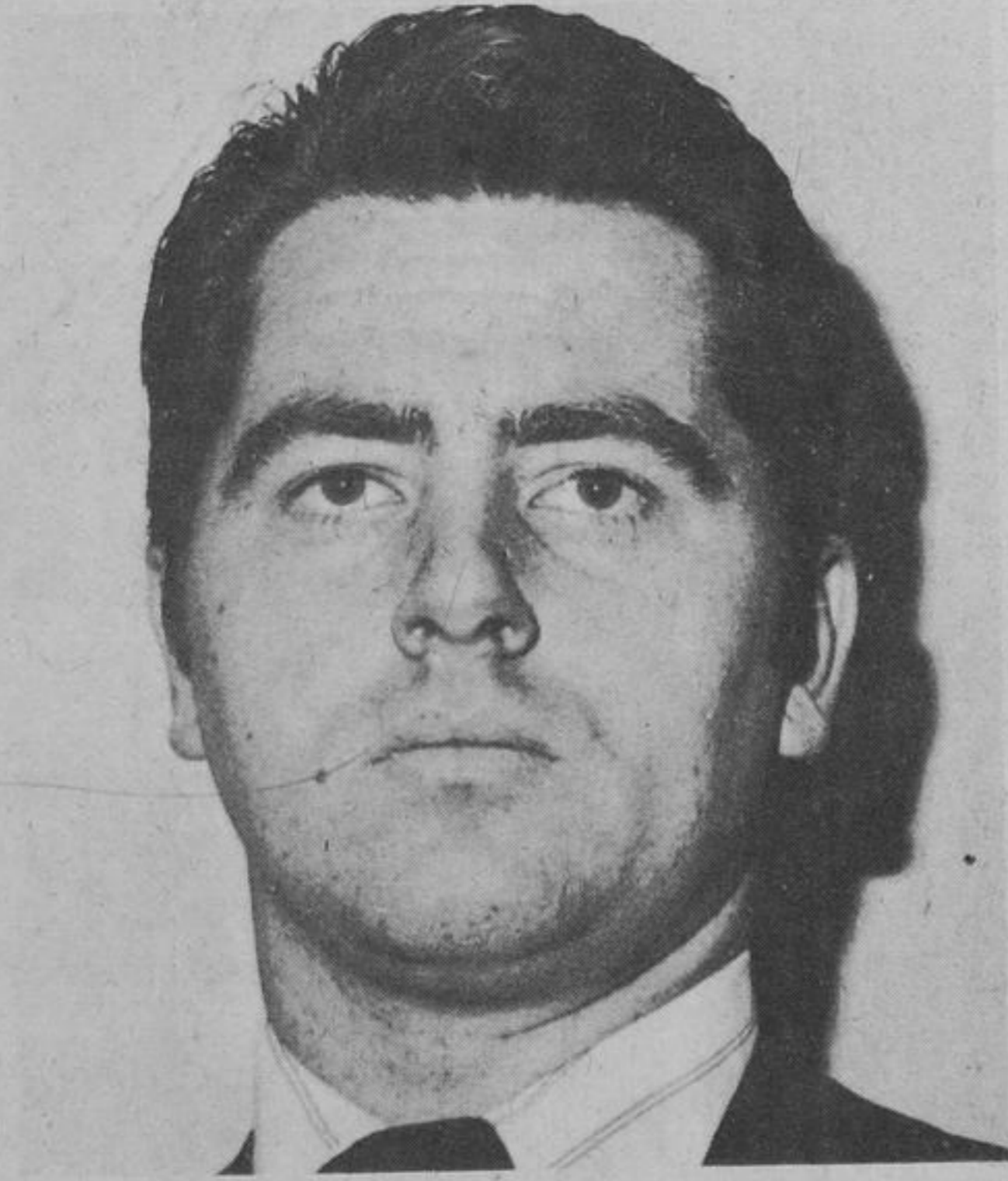
Staff Sgt. Moorhead, 34, has been a policeman for 13½ years, and is president of the York Regional Police Association. He was found guilty of two major offences under the Police Act as a result of the three-day disciplinary hearing. Both charges related to information from the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) that was relayed to Mr. Sheldrake.

Judge O'Connell said he "thought a lot" about the penalty and decided "with a great deal of reluctance" that Staff Sgt. Moorhead could no longer be allowed to serve as a policeman.

"The only penalty for substantial breach of (the policeman's oath) is dismissal or resignation," the judge said.

Summarizing his thoughts on the Moorhead case, Judge O'Connell said:

"In my view, it involves something beyond a mistake or



Sgt. JOHN MOORHEAD

an indiscretion. It involves a man of substantial years as a police officer, who has reached substantial rank (at a relatively young age), becoming involved with investments which caused him, in my view, to breach the oath of office.

"It takes a strong person who holds an office which compels confidentiality not to be swayed by persons he previously worked with," especially if his former police colleagues enter a similar line of work, the judge said.

Judge O'Connell was referring to Staff Sgt. Moorhead's investments in Mr. Sheldrake's credit reporting company and in the numbered company that owns Knight Security in Newmarket.

Staff Sgt. Moorhead was one of the original investors in that numbered company, along with Ray Twinney, then a regional

councillor and now Newmarket mayor; Robert Armstrong, real estate company owner; and Lorne Stevenson, former York policeman.

Another ex-York policeman, David Smalley, later bought into the company. Staff Sgt. Moorhead turned over his interest to his father late in 1977, although he continued to keep a Knight Security two-way radio in his car after that time, a fact noted by the judge Friday.

Mr. Sheldrake was to have been a star witness in the Moorhead case, but police couldn't locate him. He is reported to be in Florida, but his "unseen presence" pervaded the hearing, as defence counsel Arthur Maloney noted in his summation Wednesday.

Mr. Maloney called Mr. Sheldrake a "very bizarre individual who generated a whole mess of trouble that was completely quashed."

The defence lawyer also said Mr. Sheldrake could have been the person who called a York police cadet in March 1978, identified himself as Staff Sgt. Moorhead, and asked the cadet to run a series of CPIC checks.

Judge O'Connell rejected that argument, stating that he is convinced the cadet knew the caller was Staff Sgt. Moorhead. Evidence from those CPIC checks was found in Mr. Sheldrake's office files.

About the same time those checks were run, Staff Sgt. Moorhead invested \$6,000 in Mr. Sheldrake's company, Webshel

(See MOORHEAD C-7)

Look at future Monday

Anyone interested in seeing what the heart of Richmond Hill may look like in the future is invited to a public meeting in the town's council chambers.

Next Monday, February 26, at 7:30 p.m. the planning department of the town has arranged a meeting for residents to view the plans for Richmond Hill's proposed Civic Centre and participate in discussing this important proposal.

The town is hoping to create a civic centre on the south west corner of Major Mackenzie Drive and Yonge Street that will house public facilities, such as a city hall, library and theatres, recreational facilities as well as private office buildings and retail space.

The focal point is to be the civic square itself, with an opportunity for outdoor theatre and a bandshell.

Commissioner of Planning, Bill Power said, "we want a centre that does not only have a day life

but will be alive in the evening as well."

He described a centre with hotel, dining accommodation, cultural and recreational facilities, sprinkled with retail facilities that would provide a night life.

At the public meeting there will be a slide presentation that will show the basic concept, the sequence of construction and a general idea of cost.

This is a final concept design only, pointed out Mr. Power allowing a great deal of flexibility in shape, design and architecture of the buildings.

Mr. Power predicts the private office buildings will be constructed first, in about two to four years he said, and forecasts the mid '80s for the city hall, adding that it will be council's decision when the municipal portion will be built.

The Planning Commissioner said the key to the centre is that it will become the focal point of Richmond Hill, "designed not to destroy the historical skyline of Richmond Hill."

"It's a modest concept," he said, "but quite exciting."

Missing 4 hours, girl safe

A Richmond Hill father would like to thank all those who took part in a four-hour search for his daughter Monday.

Eight-year-old Elaine Peter of Elgin Mills Road turned out to have been staying at a friend's house just a couple of doors away from her own home.

But after she did not return after recess at St. Mary Immaculate Separate School, teachers and the York Regional Police took up a search. "I understand there were even snowmobiles involved," said her father, Horst Peter.

Mr. Peter pointed out the search could just have easily had a more serious end and he was heartened by the actions of community agencies.

"I am not upset with anyone, but it feels good to live in a community with a response like that," he said.

Elaine had been sent out of the school to retrieve "something that was missing from the previous day," said her father.

When she couldn't find it and fearing reprisals by school bullies, she decided to visit friends.

Her mother did not know that the children a couple of doors away were home from school because of chicken-pox, so it did not occur to her to look there.



Our own Timmy

Richmond Hill has its own Timmy for the Easter Seals campaign. He is Jimmy Smerciak, 12 of North Taylor Mills Drive, and with him in the picture are Arnold Sager (left) president of the Richmond Hill Lions and Ray Crowther, chairman of this year's campaign. (Liberal photo by Bruce Hogg).

Lions choose a "Timmy"

Richmond Hill has its very own "Timmy".

He is 12-year-old Jimmy Smerciak of North Taylor Mills Drive, and he was chosen by the Richmond Hill Lions as the 1979 Timmy.

The Easter Seals Campaign was launched last Thursday at the Lions meeting.

Guest speaker was John Butler of the Ontario Society of Crippled Children.

Mr. Butler spoke to the Lions

about some of the programs for crippled children now in effect, and he demonstrated some of the newest aids for these children.

Electronic impulses are beginning to play a major role in the treatment of crippled children and adults, and Mr. Butler was able to answer countless questions about how these work and how much they cost.

He explained that thanks to the continued generosity of the

people in Ontario, advances are always being made in the field of walking aids and artificial limbs.

All money raised by the Richmond Hill campaign will remain in this community either in the form of equipment or qualified help.

A letter will be arriving at each home in Richmond Hill with an appeal for funds. As well, there will be some canvassing, mostly of businesses.

OMB turns thumbs down on Spring Mills

A plan for a rural estate subdivision in the north part of Richmond Hill has been refused by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

Spring Mills Estates Limited had been turned down by the town and the region regarding their application for approval of a proposed plan of subdivision and consequently appealed to the OMB to change the decision.

A week long hearing was held early in January at the Richmond Hill Public Library.

The property in question is a parcel of 105 acres on the east side of Bayview Avenue just south of the Stoffville Sideroad. Spring Mills Estates has proposed 52 one-acre lots for this location.

The town and the region objected, saying among other points, the application did not conform to the official plan, the land was in fact prime agricultural land, the parcel is part of the Oak Ridges Moraine study area, and that such a development would institute a trend which would change the rural character of the area.

The OMB heard evidence from qualified consultants for the developer answering the town's objections as well as the concerns of local citizens regarding the proposal.

The board agreed with the developer's witnesses the lands in question do not constitute prime agricultural land, and the proposal would not retain the rural character of the landscape, but it was not proven whether the property is located with the Oak Ridges moraine.

The planner for the region pointed out during the hearing that the proposed subdivision, along with the Trailwoods subdivision immediately north, would comprise a total of 95 lots and at an estimated population yield of 3.5 persons per unit there would be approximately 333 people in the two subdivisions.

The regional planner was of the opinion that a population of 333 constituted a large hamlet or new community and would encourage further requests which would be followed by demands for extension of services, a fact with which the board agreed.

After carefully considering the evidence the board concluded a case has not been made to justify the request of the owner and the application was refused.

Principles of Spring Mills

Estates have not arrived at a decision regarding their next step at this time, but there are several avenues of appeal open, one of which is to ask the OMB to have another hearing.

Two weeks ago council passed a motion to notify the OMB explaining the majority of the 1979 council were in favour of the subdivision, whereas the previous council had been against it.

This motion was passed with a five to four vote with both sides feeling very strongly about their stand on the issue.

The OMB decision states "on the evidence the board is of the opinion that council has acted in a reasonable manner" referring to the earlier decision to turn down the subdivision.

Mayor Dave Schiller said he feels the board did consider this latest move by Richmond Hill council and notwithstanding the latest notice, made their decision based on evidence before them.

But, the mayor was careful to add if there is a re-decision to be made and if the five members of council are of the same mind, the decision might be different.

Community Pulse

Lotsa fish

The last time Branch 375 of the Royal Canadian Legion held a Fish 'N Chip night, you couldn't find a ticket anywhere. So they decided to do it again, but this time, things are a bit tougher. One official says only 50 tickets have been sold "and I ordered 100 pounds of fish". The "Over 'ome" night is scheduled for this Friday, February 23, at the Legion on Ohio Road. Entertaining will be George Cowie and his band. Things get underway at 8:30 p.m. and tickets, at \$4 a crack, are available at the door or at the bar in the Legion. The event is open to members and guests.

Rams end season

Oh, woe is the life of the Provincial Junior A hockey fan in Richmond Hill. Another season shot, before it really got going. The Rams found themselves in an also-ran position this week, three points out of the final playoff spot. They won their last game of the season, but the most match was last week and they lost that one. Details on B-1.

Let Region do it...

Richmond Hill's Commissioner of Works will advise the Region that the town would like them to assume maintenance and reconstruction of the following roads: Carrville Road from Bathurst Street to Yonge Street, 16th Avenue from Bayview Avenue to Highway 404 and Bethesda Sideroad from Bayview to Highway 404. Councillors felt that because these roads do not just serve the municipality, but rather the whole region, that government should be responsible for the upkeep.

Let us do it...

Councillor Lou Wainwright advised council last Monday he will present a motion to advise the region Richmond Hill feels land severance should be in the hands of the municipality "where it belongs". The councillor said he had received complaints from constituents regarding decisions of the regional committee.

Still undecided

Staff Sgt. John Moorhead says he hasn't decided whether to appeal the judge's decision ordering his resignation from the York Regional Police.

In an interview Monday, however, he said he is doubtful that an appeal would be successful. He noted that the appeal would be to the Ontario Police Commission, which originally issued the order he was convicted of violating.

That order forbids a policeman from giving confidential police information to unauthorized persons.

"I don't think they (the OPC) are going to go against a county court judge's decision," Staff Sgt. Moorhead said.

However, he said a number of his friends in the police force have urged him to appeal, and he hasn't ruled out that possibility.

His lawyer, former Ontario Ombudsman Arthur Maloney, has offered no advice, but is awaiting Staff Sgt. Moorhead's direction, he said.

Staff Sgt. Moorhead said he was surprised at Judge Hugh O'Connell's decision. "I had a hard time believing what I heard," he said.

He said he hadn't given much thought to seeking future employment, although "I've had a couple of offers since this business happened."



The first afternoon Richmond Hill council meeting was played in front of a full house — at least temporarily. At least two councillors who support afternoon meetings said they felt the town business was handled quickly and more efficiently, but not many stayed around to judge. (Liberal Photo by Bruce Hogg)

Here's the score at council

Note to anyone keeping track of attendance figures for the afternoon versus evening meeting issue in Richmond Hill.

Present: 28 students from Crosby Heights Senior Public School and one teacher (all of whom left at 2:30 p.m. 15 minutes after the meeting started), four people making up a delegation (who left after

their presentation), six staff members and two members of the fire department each (who left after their department reports to council), two members of the CAG and five interested citizens (who stayed) and a Classicom Cable 10 representative who got it all on tape.

Absent: one councillor

(John Birchall) who did not arrive until the portion at the end of the meeting entitled "New Business" because of his business commitments.

Two of the councillors who supported afternoon meetings drew the attention of their fellow councillors to how quickly the business had been covered with all councillors "much sharper".