

Caledonia man launching OPP racial profiling complaint

By Lynda Powless
Editor

A Caledonia man is accusing the Haldimand County OPP of "racial profiling" after an armed OPP Emergency Response Team (ERT) team descended on his Thistlemore Street home last Thursday night.

Rick Fletcher said he was in bed when his son came running into the house about 11 p.m. Thursday saying there were armed police outside.

"I pulled on my pants and went outside and Jesus Christ they were everywhere. They were all over my property."

He said "when I asked one OPP officer what was going on, he pointed a gun at my chest and started yelling at me like he was in the middle of a Viet Nam movie, that he was there to protect me."

He said it started when a female OPP patrol officer came up to the house and began

questioning his son's "native friend Mason."

He said "This officer was in a cruiser going by and saw my son and his friends in the garage where they had been visiting all evening and went up and started questioning Mason (Thomas)."

He said "she kept asking him why are you here. Why are you here?"

He said the two young men told her he was visiting.

Fletcher said when his son came in to get him, "his girlfriend said the officer went back to her cruiser and said 'he went in the house. Come on in. Come in.'"

"She made the call to make a strike against my sleeping family."

He said his neighbours were all out wondering what was going on.

"There were OPP everywhere. They came over my back fence, they were in my



Justin Fletcher and his friend Mason Thomas had been "hanging out" in his dad's garage turned rec space when armed OPP descended on them Thursday.

front yard, they had guns, they had a dog. They came up in a van and at least three armed guys came out of it, and there was the canine

cops. There was a lot of OPP on my property."

He said almost as fast as they descended they left without charging or arresting anyone.

"It was a clear case of racial profiling. They went after my son; his friend Mason who was standing next to my son. They were in the garage visiting. Mason is big," he said.

Fletcher said he learned there had been a car chase on Fifth Line on Six Nations that ended with the car being dumped and the driver running all the way to Caledonia. OPP Communications officer Mark Foster originally told Turtle Island News he had no report of the Caledonia incident but after checking a second time he found an "assist Six Nations."

"It was a Six Nations call so there is no incident report on our part

He said OPP assisted with a canine track plus two emergency response teams and a patrol officer.

He said the suspect's track went from Fifth Line and ended in the Canadian

Tire (on Argyle Street) area."

He said OPP were dispatched through the subdivision looking for "the people responsible for this vehicle."

He said he had no report of a description of who the OPP were looking for.

Six Nations Police put out a description saying the suspect driver is described as "a Native male, with a dark complexion

and thin build, approximately 18-20 years of age, last seen wearing a turquoise jersey and a matching hat worn backwards."

Mason Thomas was not wearing a turquoise jersey and at 290 lbs, he says he doesn't have a thin build. "I'm a big guy. Not a chance they could mistake me for a skinny guy."

He said he had "just had an operation to remove a cyst from my back. I have to have a bag with a tube attached to

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