

# Officer had honourable intentions, hearing told

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acted inappropriately by speaking to the media without permission and by refusing to speak to OPP investigators, said York Region Det. Graeme Turl.

"He knowingly went on (the CTV news program) W5 without permission," Det. Turl said.

He said the guilty plea and the sentence, agreed to by police counsel Elizabeth Cowie and Const. Lee's lawyer William MacKenzie, were a fitting end to the saga. The insubordination charge was stayed.

Const. Lee is performing uni-

form duties with York Regional Police. The conviction remains on his police record.

During the hearing, Mr. MacKenzie said while the officer breached procedure, he did so with honourable intentions.

Const. Lee was concerned a force other than the OPP should conduct an independent review of the investigation, he said. He made his concerns over the re-investigation public and, in doing so, breached police procedure.

"He felt in his mind there was a public safety issue and a public interest issue in getting his message to the public," Mr. MacKenzie said.

The events leading up to yesterday's hearing began on a wintry night in 1994.

Mr. Sikura, 60, died trapped in his Cadillac Seville Nov. 25, 1994 after driving up to his Warden Avenue-Bloomington Road area ranch. His charred body was discovered leaning on the passenger side door, one leg over the steering wheel, about 10:30 p.m. Although the ignition was off, all doors were locked.

On June 1, 2001, Const. Lee submitted a report outlining concerns he had about the original investigation and asked that an independent force conduct a further probe. The 16-year-veter-

an had launched his own investigation, interviewing witnesses who had not been questioned by police. At least two of them reported a car speeding away from the house while the fire raged.

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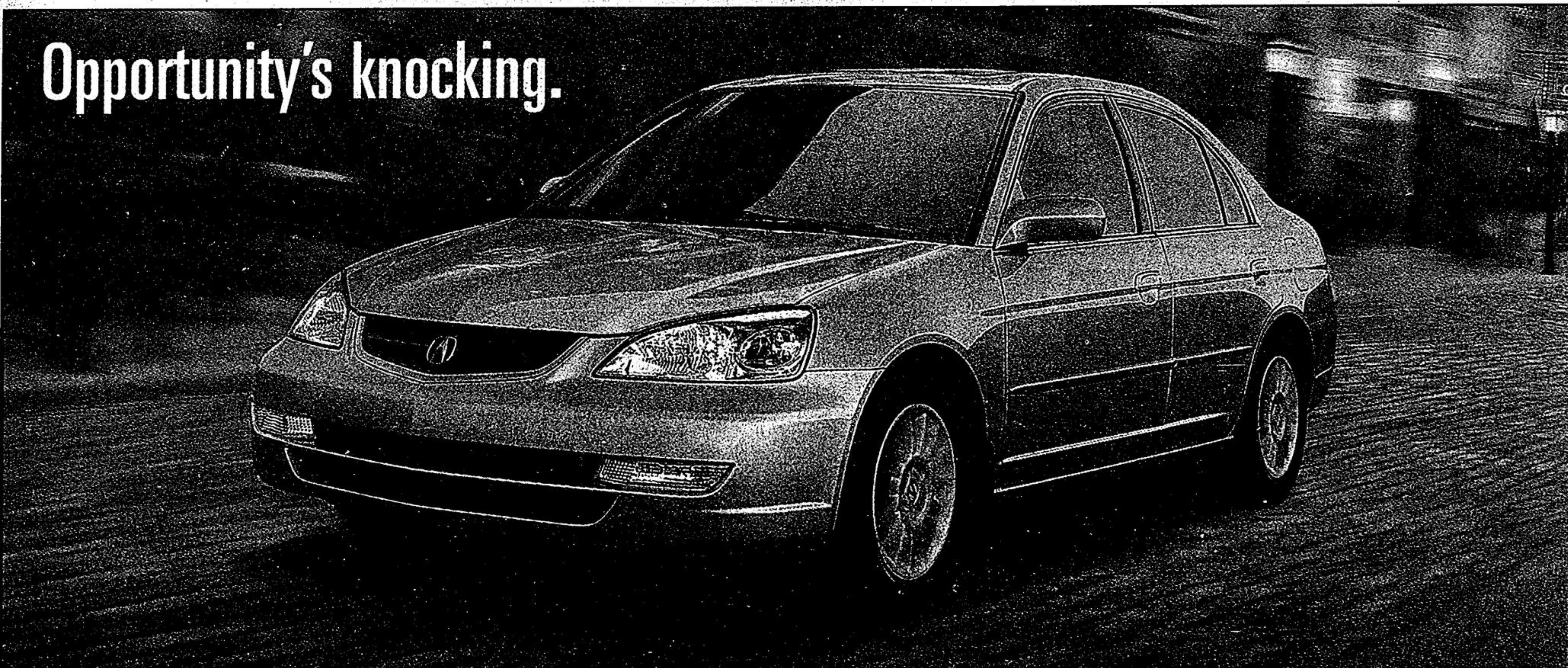
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