

Change of Command Speech

Bradley S. Duncan, M.O.M.

Chief of Police

August 3, 2010

Your Honour, Madam Justice Kathleen McGowan, Your
Worship Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco-Best, Police Services
Board Vice-Chair Gord Hume, Board member Dr. Rod
Singh, immediate past member Shanthi Radcliffe,
distinguished members of the Judiciary, Members of
Provincial and Federal Parliament, Members of Council,
Faith Community leaders, Chiefs of Police, Deputy Chiefs,
Senior Officers, Sworn and Civilian members, Father Jim
Mockler, Reverend David Carrothers, community
members, family and friends of the London Police Service.

I want to thank all of you for attending today's ceremony,
for you honour the London Police Service and the office of
the Chief of Police with your presence.

Your attendance also pays tribute to Chief Faulkner's dedicated service, as well as recognizing the efforts of distinguished Chiefs who have served before him: Chief Walter T. Johnson, Chief LaVerne Shipley, Chief Julian Fantino, and Chief Brian Collins. I am humbled to be in the presence of these past leaders and take great comfort in knowing that they have ensured that, through successive years of dedicated stewardship, the London Police Service remains one of the finest services in all of Canada.

I welcome the opportunity to build upon such a strong foundation.

I thank Chief Murray Faulkner for 36 years of service, six of them as Chief of Police. Murray, you have raised the bar for this Service in so many ways, through your community focus, your work with charities, and your willingness to engage in collaborative approaches to solving issues as they arise. I know that I speak on behalf of everyone in this room and offer our heartiest congratulations on a “job well done.”

I am grateful for the London Police Services Board for their confidence in selecting me as Chief of Police of this very fine organization, and I look forward to working with a Board that is progressive, forward thinking, and, above all else, committed to the service our community.

It is the Board that acts as the barometer for our community, and I will continue to ensure service excellence in accordance with the Board's vision through strong business planning and effective deployment of resources. I look forward to leading a contemporary, committed Service whose members, both sworn and civilian, possess a work ethic that is second to none and continues to ensure that we remain the best police service possible.

I am joined on stage by my Senior Management Team, both sworn and civilian, and I am fortunate to have such a professional, hard-working group of individuals who share my passion for our Service, and who are committed to providing strong leadership to the men and women of our organization.

I want to personally recognize Deputy Chief Ian Peer, who has been an integral part of the Executive and whose work ethic and abiding support will continue to ensure that we have a strong experience base as we move forward with our new command structure.

As a police leader, I clearly understand and support the need for effective community partnerships. Partnerships that are engaging, purposeful, and successful. Partnerships that provide the basis for collaborative solutions when we are confronted with issues affecting the broader spectrum of our community.

Today, we have representation from the Justice System; our religious and faith-based communities; municipal, provincial and federal police authorities; politicians from every level of government; individual and community advocates, educators, business persons, cultural and ethnic stakeholders and many other interest groups. All of you create a wonderful community mosaic that we must celebrate and not alienate.

Policing our community has become increasingly complex, as many of my police colleagues will confirm. There has never been a time in our history where collaboration is so necessary in order for us to resolve community issues and problems. I am committed to the use of innovative strategies that rely on mutually-beneficial and fiscally-responsible partnerships.

This is especially necessary in economic times that require us to reexamine priorities with the express purpose of continuing to ensure that we are a safe and secure community. As a Service, we have always supported an innovative, forward-thinking philosophy that has served us well. I will work diligently, as Chief of Police, to provide the necessary infrastructure to support a safe community.

The motto of the London Police Service is “Deeds not Words”. Clearly, dialogue is an important aspect of any approach to solving community issues; however, it is essential that we proactively take action to ensure that we have positive, measurable outcomes in our approach to issues as they arise. Excellent service delivery is at the core of what a police service provides for its community and we will continue to do just that.

Listening, observing, approaching, acting, and excelling are words that describe a service that engages with those we serve to ensure that needs are met in a timely and supportive manner.

As I look upon those in attendance today, I see great strength. The presence of our policing colleagues demonstrates unity and this strength that is predicated on our collective ability, desire, and commitment to provide policing excellence. I acknowledge my wider police community, police officers, senior executives and Chiefs of Police, who ensure that essential programs and staffing are in place to keep their respective cities, towns, and regions safe. I acknowledge our collective ability to address policing priorities at provincial and national levels.

As a member of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, I have seen firsthand the positive changes that can be made possible through a unified and informed front. We recognize that in addition to the leadership provided to our individual organizations, we have the additional responsibility to move the profession forward to meet anticipated challenges and changes.

I am joined today by many community partners, many of whom have worked with me and the London Police Service for decades. Many of you have assisted our Service to become better partners, to be more informed on issues, to be more understanding of our diverse communities, and to be more willing to listen and embrace the need to change to meet the needs of our citizens.

Living in large urban communities is complicated and requires many forms of cooperative interaction, but at the same time it is this interaction that creates a vibrant spirit of pride that defines what it means to call London our home.

All of you work very hard to make our community a better place, and I am grateful for your attendance here today.

The women and men of the London Police Service are highly dedicated and motivated. They are among the finest examples of police and civilian professionals anywhere. It is indeed an honour to be chosen to lead the London Police Service, knowing that it is the people within our organization who understand that we have a calling like no other profession, and that duty is what drives us forward to serve each and every day in many different capacities.

Each of us, both sworn and civilian, have important, individual roles to play, which results in a model of service delivery based on compassion, diligence, commitment, and above all else integrity. It will continue to be my priority to ensure that we are a well-trained and properly-equipped police service, working under the best of conditions possible given the nature of our work.

I look forward to continuing a positive and mutually-beneficial relationship with our London Police Association.

It has always been clearly understood that the work of our members needs to be at the forefront of our considerations as it is work that, at times, is trying, difficult, and extremely challenging. Together we provide the basis for a work environment that encourages dialogue and is capable of meeting change and challenges as they arise.

As we move forward, it will be imperative that we build on our excellent staff relations, our work within our communities, and the development of innovative policing strategies to ensure that we continue to have a progressive, police service, of which we can all be so very proud.

As I thought about what I wanted to say this morning, I found myself to be somewhat introspective, giving some thought as to how I have arrived at this moment in my career, and what were some of the defining moments that can illustrate the importance of others in influencing one's chosen vocation.

Policing is like no other profession insofar as much of what you come to understand about the job can't be found in a classroom or a book. It is based on experience and a willingness to be shown the way by others within the profession.

Today, I will take a moment to extend my appreciation to all who have mentored me throughout my career and there are many; however, I owe a debt of gratitude to one individual who first taught me how to be a good street cop, who taught me the value of public service, to never forget the victims we encounter and help, and to work diligently to keep our neighbourhoods safe and secure.

Not only was this person my training officer when I was first hired, but I also had the good fortune of becoming his partner when I ventured into the world of major crime investigations which, as most of you know, became my passion for many years.

So to retired Sergeant Earl Steel, who is among us today, I thank you for setting me on the right course, for demonstrating what it means to be a good police officer, for inspiring me to want to serve this great organization, and for instilling within me the knowledge that as police officers, we can make a significant difference in people's lives.

Throughout my career, I have had the good fortune to work with many individuals who reinforced those teachings, beliefs, and ideals, and I owe a debt of gratitude to all who have mentored and assisted me along the way.

As a police officer, I understand that work/life balance is an important factor for our members in terms of being ready and able to tackle what can often be very difficult and trying work. To my family, Leslie, Matt, Missy, and Amy, and all of our friends here today thank you for being so supportive for all these years. I will continue to rely on your strength, patience and advice, for it has provided me with the grounding that is needed to undertake the difficult and trying work that is associated with our policing profession.

I would also like to thank Madam Justice Kathleen McGowan for presiding over the Oath of Office. It was very meaningful to have you here today. To Sergeant Tom O'Brien, thank you for agreeing to be our Master of Ceremonies. I would also like to recognize the efforts of, Jennifer Foster, Lori Berkelmans and Sue Campbell, who assisted in the preparations for this ceremony.

I also owe a special thanks to Susan Talbot for her very capable behind the scenes coordination in order to ensure that all of the logistics were undertaken and completed.

Well done and thank you!

I extend my appreciation to our Colour Guard, the London Police Pipes and Drums and our Auxiliary members for making this such a memorable event.

Thank you to Carly Patrick, for your wonderful voice, your “Oh Canada” was beautiful. Finally, to Reverend Carrothers and Father Mockler I appreciate your prayers of encouragement and support.

In closing, as Chief of Police, I will continue to ensure that we have a safe city through ongoing community consultations; innovative crime prevention strategies, effective victim assistance programs, facilitation of strong community partnerships, proactive criminal interdiction practices, and integrated service delivery.

This will be accomplished through the work of all of us within the London Police Service, for we are a strong organization; we are women and men who know what it means to serve and we do so with pride, integrity and determination. Thank you.