

In 1982, the Police Association of Ontario convened for its 50th Annual General Meeting, and began its 50th year of operation. This milestone was a time for the PAO to consider its history and the meaning of the Association's past to the police personnel of that time. It can be said that the history of the PAO is a history of the development of the police profession in Ontario. As of 1982, the police service had come to be regarded as a definite profession during the years since the founding of the PAO in 1933. The PAO had been, and continues to be, a catalyst for the betterment in the professional status of police personnel in Ontario. The Association's history is a story of events which have shaped the professional identity of police personnel of Ontario.

*The majority of the following information has been extracted from *A History of the Police Association of Ontario*, a book by Charles Addington and published by Phelps Publishing Company on behalf of the London Police Association in 1982.*

The Early Years (1930 - 1939)

In the 1930's policing was a comparatively undefined function. There was no single law governing the police occupation and providing the definition of a police officer in Ontario. The Municipal Act referred to police in incorporated villages, towns and cities, and the Constables Act pertained to county police and the Ontario Provincial Police. By 1935, the OPP were increasingly assuming the duties of the old county constabularies, although some part-time county constables continued to function. Policing was most irregular in the rural areas and villages and towns of the province, where a policeman might serve as in a number of part-time positions, including such combinations as chief constable and weed inspector. The village of Port Stanley, for example, required its constable to "do and perform any work on the roads, sidewalks, or buildings belonging to the Village... including helping and assisting others... working there at". The former sounds a great deal like community policing, while the latter seems to be a reversal of the role played by today's auxiliary police officers. Policing was not viewed as a full-time profession and in many communities the local police force was often relegated to the back room in the local municipal office.



This state of affairs resulted in unequal standards of law enforcement. Even in towns and cities which had full-time police officers, the quality of policing depended very much on the political and financial priorities of the local municipal council, especially where the force was governed by a committee of municipal councillors. Does this have a familiar ring in 1997? Such standards of operation were reflected in the pay and working conditions of the police in this period. Pay varied greatly and a six- or seven-day week was the general rule.

Most police officers had no opportunity to attend a police training school. There was no Worker's Compensation and benefits such as group insurance and pension were by no means standard. In most municipalities, there was no local police association to represent members of the police force and express their concerns. Policing could be very political, for a police officer had very few definite rights in matters of discipline or dismissal. For instance, in the village of Long Branch, the by-law merely stated that constables could be dismissed "at any time for a breach of any of their duties..." Similar rules and regulations permitted many municipalities to manage their police personnel in an arbitrary way.

In 1933, the year that the Police Association of Ontario was formed, first class constables in 25 different cities in Ontario worked up to an average of 58.76 hours a week. The average work week in some of the more poorly paid town and village forces was frequently longer. Perhaps some would view this as a possible answer to the current shortage of police officers on patrol.

In the early 1930's, it became increasingly obvious that existing standards in policing were inadequate to meet the demands of modern society. Many of Ontario's chiefs of police felt the need for concerted action to improve the police service. The imminent challenge of new technology to law enforcement brought policing standards of the day into sharper focus. People were beginning to wonder if the police were fully prepared for future needs under a policing system that had not significantly changed for generations. As members of the Chief Constables' Association of Canada the Chiefs of their day promoted closer cooperation between police forces in Canada in the interest of more efficient policing. It became apparent that the needs of police forces in Ontario could not be fully accommodated owing to the differences in the administration of law enforcement from province to province. Faced with that realization a meeting of Ontario's police leaders was held on October 11th, 1933. Twenty police officials met at the Royal York in Toronto and the outcome of the meeting was to be the formation of the Police Association of Ontario.

The founding members adopted a constitution containing the objects of the new Association:

For the purpose of having a closer cooperation between all law enforcement officers throughout the Province of Ontario. To assist in maintaining the honour of the members of the Association. To provide voluntary financial assistance to any member or his dependent. During its early years the PAO was primarily an organization of police chiefs and senior police officers. Only chief constables or senior officers had the right to vote in the annual election of Officers of the Association. The Association is remembered as a social group of chief constables. The main focus of activity was the annual general meeting and convention.



These gatherings included various guest speakers such as judges, crown attorneys, and officials from the OPP, the RCMP, the FBI, and so on. Much of the business centered around the drawing up of resolutions to be presented to the Attorney General. Providing a glimpse into the future were the often-repeated requests to eliminate political interference in the operation of police forces.

In 1934 the PAO presented a brief to the Attorney General A.W. Roebuck. The document called for uniformity of police working conditions and pensions, and elimination of politics from law enforcement. It further called upon the provincial government to place all police forces under the authority of police commissions, to establish a central police school, to create a pension fund for municipal police and to secure the introduction of pensions for widows and children of police officers killed in the line of duty.

The 1930's and 1940's were not auspicious times for a newly-founded organization like the PAO. Governments were preoccupied with the demands of the Depression and the war, and disinclined to implement reforms in policing. (I wonder what war the New Democrats were fighting in the early 1990's?) At the convention in 1939, President Daniel Boyd remarked upon the PAO's lack of influence: "We have been received with the utmost courtesy and attention, but to the present we have accomplished exactly nothing in the way of legislation tending for better methods of law enforcement. I will be glad if someone will devise a method whereby the police Association can bring home to the people of our province and to elected representatives the necessity of coordination of police forces of this province. All other objects should take second place to this, for if we attain proper cooperation between the various police forces, we will easier attain those other things which we consider essential to the betterment of police officers and law enforcement".

In the late 1930's the PAO amended its constitution and by-laws to allow constables to become members of the Executive Committee and to permit one voting delegate for every ten members of a police force in addition to the Chief Constable. As a result, the PAO became a more broadly representative association of police officers. By 1939, membership climbed to over 1,000. It was the same year that the first person not the rank of chief constable was elected as President. By 1942-43, chief constables were a minority in the Executive Committee.

The 1940's - Changes Coming Our Way

The leading advocate of an expanded PAO was Harold Nash, Chief Constable of Guelph. Nash was a member of the Executive Committee having been elected in 1937. In 1942, he became President of the PAO. He chaired a committee to determine the lack of growth in the membership of the Association. He subsequently recommended the adoption of a new constitution and by-laws to provide for province-wide membership through the affiliation of local police associations. Nash and others felt that the PAO should be organized to speak for the rights of police officers. He sought to increase the membership of the Association in order to promote and obtain these rights, and thereby improve the individual policeman and the police profession as a whole.

In 1943, the PAO and the police profession were on the threshold of a major transition. Events in the next few years were to have a lasting influence on police officers in Ontario. It was during this time that the PAO was established as a professional organization dedicated to the attainment of full professional status for its members. The 1943 convention sounded a note of reform. A committee was mandated to prepare a report on standardization of police wages, the establishment of a province-wide pension plan for police officers and increased provision of advanced police training.

After the 1943 convention, Harold Nash gathered support for his vision of a reorganized and redefined PAO. In 1944, he and a delegation from the PAO, presented a brief to the Attorney General of Ontario, L.E. Blackwell. The brief was a blueprint for reform. It called for the adoption of a uniform system of police organizations and administration in Ontario, higher standards of municipal police services, and legislation to permit establishment of municipal police pension funds. Particular measures in the brief included standardization of entry and promotion qualification in police forces, standardization of training and working conditions and adoption of minimum wage. To highlight the need for pension reform the brief noted the example of a Sault Ste. Marie police officer who was 80 years old and still working.

Also in 1944, Harold Nash and his supporters sought and obtained a charter of incorporation for the PAO, which would enable the Association to become involved in collective bargaining for police officers in Ontario. The newly incorporated Association was now going to be the leader in regards to such items as working conditions, minimum pay, police commissions, police schools, pension after 30 years of service (that didn't take long) and the implementation of minimum standards of policing.

A number of influences were responsible for the extensive changes in the PAO and its role in the police structure in the 1940's. World War II was a definite factor. Many younger policemen were war veterans and had traveled more widely than preceding generations of Canadians, forming new attitudes from their experiences. The war itself created a general expectation of change in post-war society and its institutions. Changes in the leadership and membership of the PAO were another evident influence on the course of events in these years. For example, the recognition of the Member Associations in the new structure of the PAO brought the organizers and representatives of local police associations into the leadership of the provincial association. The growing size and strength of local associations resulted in a more active PAO. Such heightened activity was apparent at the time of the passage of the Police Act. Compounding these influences was the several years of neglect of police policy by government. After over a decade of apathy and indifference, changes in the police service and profession could no longer be ignored or delayed. By June of 1945, about 80 per cent of municipal police personnel belonged to the PAO, either through individual membership or through local Member Associations. The PAO could now lay claim to a broad basis of support and could speak on behalf of the rights of police officers as their professional organization.

The PAO's influence on government policy started to take recognizable form after the reorganization of 1944. In 1945, the Workmen's Compensation Act began to cover employees at the municipal level of government. In 1946, Ontario's first Police Act came into existence. The

passage of the Police Act of 1946 symbolized the expanded PAO's political and legislative influence.

The early success of the reorganized and expanded PAO were all the more remarkable in view of the obstacles that the Association had to overcome. Police officers were often threatened with being charged under the Police Act for their PAO involvement. A number of new local associations had to meet under somewhat secret conditions until chief constables and governing authorities officially recognized their right to organize. Organizing was also difficult as members of the PAO did not have any time off from duty to travel to the regular Executive Board meetings across the province. (Fifty years later some of our less-progressive police services boards still share that view when it comes to time off for association affairs). The financial well being of the organization reached the critical stage in 1948 when the bank balance for a time hovered around the \$44.17 mark. It was a very evident spirit of determination that carried the Association through the late 40's and into the 1950's.

The 1950's - The Road Toward Full Professional Status

At the beginning of the decade the PAO's primary concern was to see that the Police Act was fully observed and enforced and that the required standards in police working conditions were upheld for all police forces. The PAO was called upon to intervene on behalf of the police officers whose rights had been violated by local authorities, particularly those in small villages and towns, where officials were uninformed about the Police Act and other laws applying to the operation of police forces. The PAO became the protector of police officers whose rights had been illegally violated.

The existence of such abuses received wide spread attention in 1950 and 1951 in a dramatic case in London, in which Detective Allan Rush was dismissed from the London City Police without stated cause or without being allowed a hearing. The matter was brought to the attention of the PAO. The Executive Board of the day passed a resolution in support of deletion of the disputed Section 13 of the Police Act, a section that was vague about dismissal of officers by police boards. A judicial inquiry into Rush's dismissal found that he had a right to a hearing. The controversy aroused by this case resulted in an amendment to the Police Act, one that provided for hearings by making suspensions and dismissals by police boards subject to regulation by the provincial government. Other situations investigated by the PAO provide a good indicator of the still deplorable conditions that existed within some police forces. In Hawkesbury police officers were required to work 72 hours a week, while those in Carleton Place had to put in 66 hours before earning their wages.

It was during this decade that the first real progress in police training began. There was cooperation between the PAO and the Chief Constables Association in the establishment of the Ontario Police College. After the Police Act was amended to provide for the college, the search began for possible sites. It must have been with some relief that the committee unanimously rejected locating the College at Camp Borden in a one-storey wooden barrack set on posts, a building which had no central heating and with a floor in immediate need of replacing. The site

eventually chosen was the RCAF Station Aylmer. Those who might recall the early years at the college will certainly agree that it was no Club Med but maybe it was better than what the army had offered at Camp Borden. The PAO's Treasurer, Dennis Latten, was chosen as the Association's representative on the advisory committee for the Ontario Police College. With the beginning of classes in 1963, the PAO reached a goal it had sought for many years.

In the late 1950's the PAO also continued its efforts in the area of pension reform. There were considerable problems involved in creating a province-wide pension scheme for police officers. The Association made repeated representations on the subject to the provincial government during this time. The government was reluctant, however, to take action beyond a 1950 amendment to the Police Act which permitted collective bargaining for pensions. Apart from the financial reluctance of smaller municipalities to offer police pensions, there were actuarial difficulties in devising a plan for an individual group such as police officers.

The 1960's - A Decade of Hard-Won Victories

The Association stepped up its efforts for pensions and formed a Pensions Committee at the 1960 Convention. After investigating government annuities and insurance company schemes, the Committee recommended that the Association ask for legislation to enable municipal police forces in Ontario to enroll in the Ontario civil service pension plan. This arrangement would have required special legislation. Before this was followed up the provincial government introduced a new pension legislation which was to include all employees at the municipal level of government in Ontario. The newly proposed pension plan was to be known as the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System.

In 1965, all municipal police officers not enrolled in a registered pension plan had to enroll in OMERS. The PAO had doubts about the potential flexibility of OMERS to meet the needs of police officers and would have some differences of opinion about the administration of the plan. Nonetheless, the complete coverage extended by OMERS meant that for the first time in the history of the police profession in Ontario, all police officers became entitled to a pension as a condition of service.

By 1961, over 95 per cent of police officers in Ontario were now members of the PAO. The affiliation of members of the Ontario Provincial Police accounted for many of the new members. Finances had taken a turn for the better to the extent that an investment portfolio was begun in 1957. By 1962 the need for a full-time Administrator had become apparent and the constitution of the Association was changed accordingly. Dennis Latten was appointed as the first Administrator bringing to the position his prior experience as both a police officer and his four years as Treasurer of the PAO. Under his leadership the PAO quickly developed into a full-time organization.

In 1964, the Police Act was amended to ensure that bargaining would begin in a specific period of time, in this case 60 days. The 1964 amendment also included the rights to bargain for grievance procedures and the right of a Police Association to be accompanied by legal counsel in bargaining sessions. In cases of dispute about the choice of an arbitrator, the matter had to be referred to the Attorney General, who was to ensure that a hearing was begun within 30 days.

During the 1960's, the police profession continued moving towards substantial improvements in conditions, particularly in the area of working conditions and training. The police officer was no longer an official who was expected to work long hours and face arbitrary dismissal for minor transgressions. In view of these developments it became apparent that the Police Act needed to be revised and made more contemporary with the improvements in conditions and professional rights attained since the original passage of the Act in 1946. For nearly two decades, the Police Act did not give a police officer the right to counsel when being tried under the Act, even if the charges resulted in suspension or dismissal. During 1963 and 1964 the PAO spent over \$12,000 in a campaign to have the trial procedures under the Act changed.

The government had other plans for amendment of the Police Act. Reacting to a scare over organized crime, Attorney General Cass introduced sweeping amendments to the Police Act in what became known as Bill 99. This Bill originally proposed that comprehensive non-emergency powers be given to the Ontario Police Commission. Bill 99 quickly became the object of wide spread public protests, because of its disregard for traditional civil liberties. During this uproar, the government made a number of changes in the Bill. The PAO believed that these changes would give certain individuals such as police chiefs and Commissioners of the OPP excessive powers-power, for example, to force police officers to testify against themselves and to produce documents under penalty of imprisonment (a blueprint later used by Howard Morton). The PAO sent a letter of protest to Premier Robarts. These new provisions were unsatisfactory to the Association and the Bill generally ignored other matters of concern, such as the right to counsel in Police Act Trials.

The government again amended Bill 99. The final version was much more in line with the PAO's objectives. In 1964 the Police Amendment Act was signed into law. The government finally accepted the need for reform of disciplinary procedures and made four significant changes to the regulations under the Act. For the first time, a police officer charged with an offence under the Act was to have a choice of summary or non summary trial, the right to counsel at non-summary trials, the right to have evidence recorded at non-summary trials, and the right of appeal to the Ontario Police Commission in non summary cases. The amendments to the Police Act in 1964 reflected the developing strength of the PAO and its influence as a full-time organization.

The 1970's - Transitions and New Challenges

After the 1964 amendments to the Police Act, the debate over the rights of police officers continued and the PAO became involved in a series of lobbying campaigns and legal battles as a result. A major dispute developed in 1969, when amendments were made to the regulations

under the Police Act. The Association took particular exception to the harsher disciplinary code contained in Ontario Regulation 110/69, which denied both the right to legal counsel in minor offences and the rights of members of the PAO to use their Administrator to represent them as an agent in trials under the Police Act. The new regulation gave increased disciplinary discretion to police chiefs and infringed upon the rights of police officers off duty and on the rights of police officers to call and attend meetings concerning a police force. Administrator Latten expressed the strong feelings of the membership:

History will chronicle with bitter amusement the ugly fact that the Ontario Police Commission denied to a policeman the judicial rights and due process of law freely given to the worst criminal.

Faced with the prospect of a huge rally of protesting members of the PAO, Attorney General Wishart met with President Syd Brown of the Association to review the amended regulation. A second meeting followed and eventually negotiated amendments to the regulation which tentatively eased some of the original provisions. When the new regulations were made which omitted some of the expected changes, the Executive Board of the PAO authorized the release of a statement of protest over the actions of the Attorney General. The events surrounding 110/69 exemplified the conflict between the Police Act and the rights of police officers as citizens. The consensus of police officers was that disciplinary matters under the Police Act were being dealt with in a manner which placed the burden of proof upon the accused, contrary to the presumption of innocence.

The Police Act remained substantially unaltered during the 1970's and the issue of police rights was still unsettled. The debate over civilian review increased the urgency of the need for some resolution of the conflict over police rights. The same might still be said today. At the 1976 Annual General Meeting the PAO endorsed the establishment of a Bill of Rights for "all police personnel in Ontario". The following year the Convention of the Association resolved that a brief requesting such a Bill of Rights be submitted to the Solicitor General as part of amendments to the Police Act.

In addition to seeking amendments to the Police Act, the PAO also addressed itself to the question of police rights in situations where police governing authorities failed to act in a lawful manner. Police officers doubted the justice of a situation in which they could be disciplined while the governing authorities remained relatively immune from penalties resulting from their official misbehaviour.

In 1976, for example the PAO defended the rights of a summarily dismissed probationary constable in the Haldimand-Norfolk Police Force and obtained a ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada, which required that the reasons for dismissal be stated and that the plaintiff officer be given a chance to respond.

During the 1970's civilian review of police forces became one of the leading police issues and has remained so until this day. In Metropolitan Toronto, the Maloney inquiry investigated police complaint procedures and the Morand inquiry reviewed police practises. These and other reports raised many questions about the disciplinary process in police forces. The PAO felt that

the question of the legal rights of civilian review was also the question of the legal rights of police officers and these rights should be given proper consideration. As the PAO stated concerning the Morand Royal Commission:

We believe that corrective measures are necessary providing they are fair, equal, protective, defensible and not so time consuming that the procedures can be used by those who seek to circumvent the law.

The provincial government did not attempt to introduce specific measures until 1977, when the Solicitor General proposed Bill 114 to establish a commissioner of citizens' complaints and a citizens' complaints and police discipline review board. The PAO did not feel that the proposed bill would be sufficiently impartial to all parties. The government decided not to proceed with Bill 114. In 1980, a new bill, Bill 47 was introduced in the Legislature by the Solicitor General. The new bill contained measures for a police complaints bureau for Metropolitan Toronto to be run by a civilian commissioner, a bureau to be operated for three years on an experimental basis. The Opposition in the Legislature felt the bill was too lenient and defeated it on second reading. With some changes the defeated bill reappeared as Bill 68 and the Metropolitan Police Force Complaints Project Act came into being.

The Metropolitan Toronto Police Association and the PAO agreed that Bill 68 was reasonable and acceptable. Noting that the membership of the PAO was "not naïve enough to think that our people are always right", the PAO's President, Ted Johnson, also remarked, "We are not going to stand for some type of inquisition where every crank and screwball can get his shots at police".

The 1970's also saw the number of civilian personnel in municipal police forces increase in great numbers, from 7.8 per cent in 1970 to over 23 per cent by the end of the decade. In 1975 the Civilian Police Personnel Association was formed in response to requests by civilian personnel for their own association. The idea was not productive or effective and the CPPA was dissolved with all civilian personnel becoming members of the Police Association of Ontario.

The 1980's - The Storm Before the Storm

The PAO began the decade with a new Administrator. After the sudden death of Mr. Dennis Latten, the PAO retained Mr. Robert Morrow as his successor.

The Association itself had reached a water shed mark in its development. It was no longer a social club but had evolved into a viable labour organization that was now representing rank and file police employees on many fronts. PAO President, Ted Johnson, made the Association's stand very clear when he advised government that within the scope of Police-Labour-Management the PAO would continue to press for participation and involvement in the decision-making process. These words would be repeated again and again as the PAO became more deeply involved in the legislation being prepared to amend the Police Act.

There were, however, many other matters on the Association's agenda, including issues such as the amalgamation of police forces. The number of municipal police forces in Ontario had dropped from 282 to 127 between 1966 and 1981. The PAO took the position that amalgamations of police forces should not adversely affect the job security, salary and fringe benefits of any police officer in the province. The reduction in the number of police forces also meant reductions in the number of PAO member associations and this had a significant impact on the operations of the Association.

In the early part of the decade the PAO brought to public attention the concern of police officers over the legal rights sections of the proposed federal Charter of Rights. The concern was that the legal rights section gave too much protection to the criminal and not enough to the law-abiding citizen. The Association believed that frivolous protection of the rights of criminals by exclusion of evidence under the new charter was not in the true interests of law enforcement and would lead to an inferior system of justice.

In a different venue, the PAO led the fight against the use of sub-compact cars for regular patrol duties. When the Sarnia Township Police ordered Volkswagen Rabbits for use as patrol vehicles, the Sarnia Township Police Association protested and contacted the PAO. The PAO appealed to the Solicitor General. A joint committee of police, administrative and safety officials studied the use of these vehicles for patrol and in the end found them to be inadequate. A regulation preventing the use of sub-compact vehicles for general patrol was approved by the Solicitor General.

Representation from the PAO also resulted in the establishment of specific standards for body armour for police officers in Ontario. In 1981, the provincial government agreed to fund the centralized purchase of such body armour for police officers.

In 1981, Mr. Mal Connolly, became the new Administrator of the PAO. Mr. Connolly was the former President of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Association. His appointment followed on the departure of Mr. Bob Morrow who had held the position for only ten months.

In August of 1983, following the dissolving of the Civilian Police Personnel Association, Mr. Bob Wilson became the PAO's first Civilian Director. Mr. Wilson was a long-time member of the Board of Directors of the London Police Association.

In 1985, the PAO was successful in convincing the Ontario Police Commission to schedule a Police Act Seminar for association representatives at the Ontario Police College. The seminar marked the first time that the facilities at the Ontario Police College had been made specifically available for police associations. Twenty-four association leaders attended and reported that the week was a very informative and rewarding experience.

The progress evident at the Police College was not reflected in other areas of the Association's relationship with government. In his address to the delegates at the 1986, Annual General Meeting in Ottawa, Mr. Neal Jessop, President of the PAO stated, "the hopes for a fair and all-encompassing Police Act are no nearer now than they were a number of years ago". Mr. Jessop cited the lack of communication between the PAO and the provincial government as a major



cause for the lack of progress. "Much of this can be blamed on Solicitor General Ken Keyes, who has kept us at arm's length during his tenure", Mr. Jessop went on to say.

As with any labour organization when the needs of the membership increase the demands on the staff rise accordingly. In 1989, to meet these demands Mr. Richard Houston was selected by the Board of Directors to become the first Executive Manager of the Police Association of Ontario. Mr. Houston had long been involved in police association work, and had served for a number of years as President of the Windsor Police Association.

With this addition to the staff, the PAO was now able to dedicate more time to training and education for its members. Seminars and workshops dealing with association subjects such as bargaining, arbitration, discipline and workers compensation were soon added to the PAO's annual curriculum.

The lack of progress in drafting a new Police Act, controversy surrounding guidelines for police pursuits and the Employment Equity Regulation, were some of the items that topped the list as the turbulence of the 1980's led the PAO directly into the maelstrom of the 1990's.

The 1990's - Policing Despite the Politics

After years of debate and political wrangling the new Police Services Act received royal assent on June 28th, 1990. The Act included a new Citizen Complaint process, a new burden of proof under the Code of Offences and changes in the legal indemnification provided to officers convicted of a criminal offence while acting in good faith while in the performance of their duty. Many of the regulations needed to accompany the Act had not been drafted and would require further debate. Although the Police Services Act addressed some of the PAO's concerns, it fell well short in others. And as the Association was soon to find out created a number of new ones, not the least of which was the addition of Boards of Inquiry as an added layer of bureaucracy to further constrict and confuse the discipline process.

On July 13th, 1990, the PAO opened its new facilities on Davand Drive, in Mississauga. This change in status from tenant to landlord had long been sought and it was with a feeling of pride and professionalism that the PAO was now open for business in their own offices.

In 1992, the PAO hosted the first "PAO LABOUR CONFERENCE". The conference has been repeated every year since. Each year the agenda is designed to cover a broad spectrum of police and labour relations topics. Police services board members, police administrators, government representatives and police association leaders are among the attendees. The Conference continues to be an occasion for dialogue and an open exchange of views between the participants.

The expansion of training and education also continued with a new emphasis on regional seminars dealing with a range of association topics. The PAO was also successful in establishing a Media Relations course for association representatives at the Canadian Police College.



With these new directions and programs, the PAO was constantly improving the services it was providing to its membership. The optimism generated by the PAO's own initiatives was, however, soon tempered by outside factors.

The slow resolution of cases by the newly created Police Complaints Commissioner's Office, the inept investigations of an understaffed, untrained and under funded Special Investigation Unit and the "Realities" of having to deal with a new provincial regime created a cauldron of police discontent the likes of which had not been witnessed before. Faced with a climate in which special interest groups and not the police had the ear of government the Police Association of Ontario was faced with one controversial government edict after another.

An example of this was the "Use of Force Regulation" which was to be part of the Police Services Act. Originally drafted with little police input, it was challenged by the members of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Association followed by the PAO. A series of meetings followed in which it became apparent that PAO input was still unwelcome and the government held steadfast to its position. During the time of the "Use of Force" debates and the surrounding controversy the Premier of Ontario was unable for some time to meet with PAO representatives. This was apparently due to his busy schedule and time constraints. Although rumour had it that he was aware of the over 5,000 police officers who gathered on the front lawn of Queens' Park to demonstrate their displeasure with his pending legislation.

In 1993, the NDP government thrust the PAO into the spectre of public sector province wide negotiations, with the introduction of the Social Contract. The PAO's member associations rallied together to negotiate the province's first sectoral agreement, followed by local agreements to deal with the requirements of the NDP legislation. Lay-offs were avoided and in the majority of cases the associations were successful in reducing or eliminating the need to resort to unpaid time off, known throughout the province as "Rae Days".

After a twenty-five-year quest, but not before the murder of Sudbury Police Constable Joey MacDonald, the Police Services Act was amended to allow Ontario's police officers to be issued with semi-automatic pistols. These pistols would replace the outdated and ineffective '38 calibre revolvers police officers had been using since the turn of the century. The government failed however, to change the regulation to allow the use of hollow-point ammunition. This is the type of ammunition recommended by gun manufacturers and ballistic experts for use in semi-automatic weapons. The PAO through Constable Tom Drouillard of the London Police Association, immediately launched a health and safety grievance with the Ministry of Labour. In the grievance the PAO cited the inadequacy and lack of protection provided by the ammunition police were being issued at the time of the complaint. The grievance became unnecessary when the new government approved the use of hollow-point ammunition in 1995.

In 1995, Mr. Mal Connolly retired from his position as PAO Administrator and was replaced by Mr. David Griffin, former Administrator of the Peel Regional Police Association.

Following the trial of Constable MacDonald's killers in March of 1995, the PAO and CPA raised the public's attention to the failings of the Ontario Parole Board. This led to the firing of Parole Board Chair Don Waddell.



Prior to the 1995 provincial election, the PAO joined forces with CAVEAT (Canadians Against Violence Everywhere Advocating its Termination) in hosting a political debate in Hamilton. Representatives from the three major parties participated and offered their views as well as the views of their parties on policing and justice issues. This marked a great change in the Association's approach to politics and policing.

In the summer of 1996, the PAO represented Ontario's front-line police officers and civilian personnel at the Policing Summit convened by Solicitor General Robert Runciman. Following this and other consultations the Minister introduced legislation in January of 1997 to radically change the way police forces are governed and reduce the provincial role in oversight of police activity. The PAO actively sought amendments to the Bill, which in its initial form dramatically reduces the rights and status of a police officer in the complaint's investigation process.

In May of 1997, the PAO held its Lobby Day. Through this and other activities the PAO successfully achieved wholesale amendments to the Bill, restoring police officer rights, including the right to appeal the decision of a disciplinary tribunal.

The ink was barely dry on these amendments when the government presented yet another challenge for police associations and public sector workers. Bill 136 introduced radical reforms to collective bargaining and restructuring in the public sector, including plans to gut the traditional essential service arbitration systems and replace neutral arbitrators with government appointees.

The PAO membership responded to the call with widespread local lobbying combined with PAO meetings with key cabinet ministers. Through this dialogue the PAO entered into negotiations with government officials over the summer, resulting in fundamental reforms to the Bill for police association members and other workers. The PAO engaged a lobbyist and advertising agency, and developed an alternative advertising campaign to raise public awareness in the event that the primary approach was not successful. While "Plan B" was not invoked this time, the lessons learned from this process will serve us well in future challenges.

With each new challenge the PAO and our member associations have built on past experiences to develop a comprehensive approach to government relations. Ultimately, it is the cooperative approach of member associations and the actions of individual members in support of these efforts which have enabled us to present a united front in the pursuit of our common goals.

In May of 1997, the PAO's change of approach was visible when PAO representatives from all over the province visited MPP's at Queen's Park to express their thoughts and concerns about policing in Ontario, at the first annual PAO Lobby Day.

The progress of the PAO can be measured in the accomplishments of its administrators, in the visions of its presidents, in the hard work and tireless efforts of its staff and most of all in the strength and support of its membership. These are also the qualities that will lead the Police Association of Ontario into the 21st century.