

a v.i.p. and me

(very interesting person)

By KATHLEEN A. HICKS

"It is very rewarding for us to know that most of the people are supporting us. I receive hundreds of letters thanking our men for the jobs they do. Just about every day I get a couple of letters commending my men for actions that they have taken and the service they have provided. I often think that if I get that many letters coming in, there must be an awful lot of people who don't bother to write."

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DOUG BURROWS:

Police Chief — Peel Regional Police Force
Former Police Chief — Mississauga Police Dept.

ME: Being assigned to head up the Peel Regional Police Force is an honor which will be bestowed upon few men in a lifetime. Express how you feel about being first.

CHIEF BURROWS: I haven't really had too much time to think about that, I have been so busy trying to get the force off the ground; and there have been literally thousands of decisions to be made initially. I am very proud and honored to be selected to this position. I'm not sure how many applications they had — it was open to anyone. But I believe there were three or four from the region and I was chosen. When the announcement was made, it was good to know a selection had been made and we could now get on with the job. I was very pleased with the way the other men responded, and also seemed to be pleased with the selection. It is an extremely important position — and demanding. We have the third largest policing responsibility in the province; third only to Metro Toronto and Hamilton-Wentworth. We have been extremely busy since I was chosen the early part of November. I am very pleased the way things are going.

ME: You are head over a 400-man team. What are some of your most prominent tasks?

CHIEF BURROWS: My initial task was to formulate an organizational structure, so that each man would know to whom he must answer, and each person would know his area of responsibility. This of course meant promotions and changes, lateral transfers and quite a change in some of the responsibilities for some of the members of the region, depending on where they had been prior to amalgamation. Then having to find a headquarters building. This was one of our biggest headaches; we didn't have any buildings in the region that were sufficient for a headquarters. We had to find a building that we could renovate as a temporary headquarters until a new one could be built sometime in the near future.

Getting the different divisions and patrol areas set up, and deciding on our needs in man power, our cars and equipment. Providing uniformity was another big problem in the region. We have to now provide uniform services throughout the region that we are responsible for. For instance, youth bureau officers, hit and run officers, traffic safety officers, and our specialized fields like homicide squads, fraud squads; getting these organized so that they would be functioning on January 1. Getting our communications and records functioning was a big task: those are two priorities and two of the most important things in any large police force. And through the media, we have been trying to have the public understand how their

services are going to improve, and trying to make them understand the long term planning that goes into the region. I now have a public relations police woman and we are hoping she can keep the public aware of what we are doing.

ME: Is it turning out to be an overly challenging position?

CHIEF BURROWS: It is an extremely challenging position. Fortunately, I have a very good staff. The men are working very hard; they have pitched in and they are thinking regional, which is important. They are forgetting about the past, whether or not they agreed with it, they are getting the job done. They are taking a mature outlook. It is not only important for the police, but for the public. It's here now, let's get on with it, get the job done, and give the public the best possible service in the world. The only way to do that is to have a co-ordinated police-public effort. I enjoy a challenge, and I don't have to go looking for them, I have found that in the past. They are constant.

ME: At your first address to the Regional Police the philosophy behind the building of the force was your topic. Did you have any apprehension before facing the group, and how was the end result?

CHIEF BURROWS: I had no apprehension really. I think I had a pretty good feeling from different sources prior to this. I enjoyed the talk I had with them, and I felt from the questions they asked that they weren't too concerned about the way the force was going to be administrated. I assured them that just

because I was Chief of Mississauga, I wasn't thinking Mississauga any longer, I was thinking regional, and that people would be promoted on merit and ability. I got a lot of feedback from that; and at that time the morale seemed quite high despite the fact that we were amalgamating five different police forces. From what I understand now, the morale is extremely high, and compared to most regional police forces, I think it is probably the highest I have ever heard of.

ME: What brought you into the police force in the first place?

CHIEF BURROWS: I got out of the Naval-Air Service after the Korean War, and I wanted to do something that I thought was worthwhile. It certainly wasn't money, because when I started I was only making \$2,700 a year and working six days a week.

ME: Having spent four years on the Ontario Provincial Police before joining the Toronto Township Police Department, what was behind the change?

CHIEF BURROWS: I started off with the Ontario Provincial Police on the highways working on traffic. I specialized in criminal identification work and the then Toronto Township Police Force did not have anyone, in fact none of the police forces in Peel County had anyone, who specialized in criminal identification work, which is primarily physical evidence at crime scenes, specializing in collection, preservation and analysis of physical evidence at crime scenes. It was very