

Robert Vallee's Deputation for the June 16-2021 Committee of the Whole

Committee of the Whole,

Last March, a Newmarket Today headline claimed that:

"Councillor Simon brushes aside concerns about driving sex work underground."

To which Grace Simon was quoted as saying: ***'That's what police are for!'***

Are both claims true or false?

The answer is they are FALSE on both counts based on our investigation.

False because #1, sex work is already entrenched and underground in Newmarket.

This, according to the May 3rd deputation of the Butterfly Asian Migrant Sex Workers' Executive Director who said:

"We need to acknowledge that many Asian migrants are now providing a lot of good service, alternative massage services to the people in Newmarket. But the new policy, Option 1 would exclude them to continue the service and many businesses would be shut down. We also need to recognize that they are the business owners/workers and residents in Newmarket who contribute to the town by paying rent, provide inexpensive massage services and spend expenses in the city. And so we should not treat them as criminals or traffick victims."

A VIP FYI for you:

Butterfly is a member of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects.

This network is comprised of 313 organisations operating in 95 countries across 5 continents.

This network actively lobbies for the **full decriminalisation of the ENTIRE sex trade** including, and I quote from their website:

"Entire sex trade includes sex workers, clients, families, and third parties such as personal managers, brothel keepers, receptionists, maids, landlords, hotels who rent rooms to sex workers and anyone else who is seen as facilitating, organising and profiting from sex work."

A 2nd VIP FYI for you:

Butterfly is also a member of the Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform.

That Alliance has launched a legal challenge to Bill C-36 in the Ontario Superior Court.

This challenge will make its way to the Supreme Court because they claim that the law, through its Criminal Code provisions, violates their human rights as sex workers.

Their goal, once again, is full decriminalization of sex work.

So, Council, do you think they are going to walk away from their territory of Newmarket where they are entrenched and are also operating freely in big markets like Toronto, Ottawa and in mid-sized markets like Markham and Vaughan?

NO WAY!!!

And they will use the justice system to achieve it.

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Now, back to Councillor Simon's ***'That's what police are for!'*** statement.

I have bad news for you Committee Members:

YRP has made body rub parlours and prostitution-related incidents a **low to non-existent** priority.

I can tell you with confidence that the Police will not be there for you to enforce that prohibition.

You are on your own.

And I'll prove it to you.

1. April 2017: Detective Thai Truong of Sex-Trafficking 'Project Raphael' fame with 104 men charged is in the spotlight.

When questioned at YRP's press conference, he admitted **"our police agency is NOT interested in investigating prostitution unless it involves children under 18 or human trafficking."**

2. One local newspaper, The Auroran, quoted Det. Truong regarding the charges laid:

"We really did not want to IDENTIFY any of the men who were NOT looking to buy prostituted children."

3. When asked to clarify his statement, Truong went on to say: **"York Regional Police has NO INTEREST in making arrests for prostitution involving 'consenting adults'."**

I remind everyone that, in Canada, buying sex is a crime that comes with a jail term regardless of age.

4. In 2019, PACT-Markham met with Truong and his boss, the Deputy Chief-Special Investigations. We asked Truong to explain the sex trafficking section's protocol for handling BRP complaints and requests for intervention, Truong said and I quote:

"When we receive them, we determine if and when we will respond."

His boss did not correct him.

5. When I asked his boss, Brian Bigras, why we are not seeing the names of 'johns' charged with the crime of purchasing sex in their published reports, he replied: **"We don't do that."**

When I mentioned that they had published the names of the 104 men charged in 2017, he said: **"We don't do that anymore."**

6. In 2020, Police Chief MacSween cancelled the investigation of Markham's 50+ body rub parlours/wellness centers that ex-Police Chief Jolliffe had ordered on our behalf through our deputation to York Region Police Services Board.

No explanation given.

7. Next in 2021 is Sex-Trafficking Detective #2, Jason Dearing.

Dearing was a co-presenter at the Town's Public Information webinar conducted by staff.

Dearing presented YRP's Massage Parlour Initiative in 2018 in which:

a) the officers identified 15 sex trade workers.

b) their average age was 40 years old, (Ah yes, Asian sex migrants), and

c) no juveniles were located.

There was NO MENTION of the # of charges laid on the BRP operators.

Why?

Because none were laid by YRP.

When Dearing was asked why the data for BRPs was so low, he replied:

"The majority of the exploitation that is taking place is OUTSIDE massage parlours, not to say that there is not exploitation or criminal activity within them, but the majority of our focus is outside of massage parlours and more in hotels and that area of the community."

8. The crime stats for the Region do explain YRP's indifference to complaints of prostitution in massage parlours by bylaw enforcement or residents.

In the past 4 years, there was:

- a 308% increase in organized crime incidents from 886 to 3,617,
- a 259% rise in shootings from 17 to 61, and
- a 30% increase in violent crimes from 6,795 to 8,830.

Lastly,

#9. York Regional Police's Crime Statistics Summary for Commodification of Sexual Activity for 2017 to 2019 includes violations for:

- obtaining sexual services,
- material benefit from sexual services,
- procuring, and
- advertising sexual services.

Focus on the decreasing # of violations/crimes:

Total of 79 crimes in 2017 down to 65 in 2018 down to 42 in 2019.

(Note: York Region has 135+ BRPs/bogus wellness-holistic centers and 3 strip clubs).

So, now that you know the facts, ask yourselves:

Is your licensing and enforcement regime strong enough to enforce that prohibition, especially without police support?

Thank you.



Robert Vallée

Board Chair & CEO

Parents Against Child Trafficking - **PACT-Markham & Richmond Hill**

and

Council of Women Against Sex Trafficking in York Region - **CWASTYR**

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