

2014.03.25

**Re: Human-rights complaint and class-action lawsuit over Wheel-Trans spy program**

**In another of its attempts** to deceive the Board, TTC staff have buried in a report its true intent: To restart the illegal and outrageous Wheel-Trans spy program.

**Let's not pretend** you don't know what I'm talking about. As I explained to the Board last summer, for years Wheel-Trans spied on its passengers. It ran a snitch line and, in quasi-totalitarian style, solicited tips from informants. It used surveillance cameras ostensibly installed solely for safety and security to covertly record the actions of passengers deemed by random third parties to be somehow not disabled enough to ride Wheel-Trans. (By implication, they'd been monitored all along to establish a baseline.) Those passengers were subjected to a grilling with the intent of booting them off the service.

**On 2013.07.10**, the Toronto Ombudsman released her report, which came about due to my complaint. The Ombudsman found that the Wheel-Trans spy program was *much worse* than even I knew about, with essentially no documentation; offensive terminology ("Questionable Rider Program"); no explanation to passengers of how TTC and its contractor conspired behind their backs; and no information that decisions could be appealed. This surveillance program had a 70% success rate in 2012: 54 out of 75 riders were booted off, leaving them with *no options* for transit. No doubt that pleased the angry managers behind this abomination, who had grown so incensed that some cripple somewhere might get a free ride that they set up their own private Stasi. This program – pogrom? – *was not* and *could not be* authorized, retroactively or not, by the Ombudsman or the Information and Privacy Commissioner. It is illegally discriminatory on its face and in its implementation, even at the level of how long TTC retains video images (look it up).

**Andy Byford**, whom I have been telling everyone within earshot is an honest and credible man, has vitiated that reputation by allowing *rogue fonctionnaires* to covertly propose that this pernicious espionage racket be brought back from the dead. It is now too late to avoid a human-rights complaint and a class-action lawsuit. The question now is who gets called as a witness – not just all present and recent members of ACAT, but all ACAT chairs in living memory and all TTC chairs, Commissioners, and Boardmembers. This means you.

**For a class-action suit**, you need a real rotter, a complete viper, to press the case. I know one.

**My friends and I will** file complaints and we *will* win. As the saying goes, this isn't a threat – it's a *promise*.