

- By Sarah Frank
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Former OPP employee to taking racism allegations to Human Rights Tribunal

Man says he was racially discriminated in the workplace

(PETERBOROUGH) A former OPP employee is taking complaints of racism in the workplace before the Human Rights Tribunal in Toronto.

Michael Jack, a Russian Jew, claims his co-workers and management at the Peterborough detachment of the OPP used his racial background against him, forcing him to resign in the final month of his 12-month probation.

The Canadian immigrant, who speaks with a thick accent, claims his co-workers referred to him as "Crazy Ivan", a derogatory nickname which he says circulated throughout the detachment. Mr. Jack also says he was deprived of regular performance evaluation meetings and developmental opportunities, among a long list of allegations detailing his unfair treatment in the workplace - for which he says he's got written documentation.

On December 15, 2009, Mr. Jack says he was released from his job based on his failure to meet the requirements of a probationary constable.

According to Mr. Jack, he graduated from the Ontario Police College in Aylmer with a 91.6 cumulative average and was the recipient of the 100 per cent Ontario Police Fitness Award - which was only awarded to 1 per cent of the recruits.

Mr. Jack's extensive work experience begins in Israel, where he worked in the Israeli Navy and with the Israeli Merchant fleet. From there, Mr. Jack began working for Intel Electronics Ltd., completing some of job training in the US.

In 2000, he immigrated to Canada, and spent five years studying and working at Trent University in Peterborough. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science and a Master of Science degree in the Applications of Modeling in the Natural and Social Sciences. His studies led him to work as a course instructor in Trent's computer science department.

Mr. Jack says the chief of York Regional Police, whom he met in the weight-lifting room at Trent, encouraged him to look into a career in policing.

He says he was offered interviews from the Halton Regional Police and York Regional Police services.

He now says he wishes he'd taken them up on their offers.

"I had no idea what I was getting myself into," he says about his job in Peterborough.

After he left the Peterborough detachment of the OPP, he says he's been hard-pressed to find a job.

"No one wanted to talk to me," he says, noting it's been a very emotional process. "Even the Brinks won't respond to me," he says, noting he feels as though he's sending resumes out into an abyss.

Lloyd Tapp, a Lindsay man who is employed by the OPP, but is off on disability, will represent Mr. Jack at the Tribunal.

Mr. Tapp says the OPP thrives on anonymity.

"That's why they have always made appeasements and or settlements before or during hearings," he says.

"Canada let this individual down. He came to Canada to make a career for himself...the OPP literally kicked the stool out from under him."

Since the case will go before the Tribunal May 22 to 24, Iain McEwan, media relations officer with the Peterborough detachment of the OPP, advised the OPP isn't providing any information about their involvement with Mr. Jack.

Mr. Jack says his objective is not personal gain, it's to tell his story.

"I lost my life," he says. "I've got nothing to lose."

<http://www.mykawartha.com/news/article/1358146--former-opp-employee-to-taking-racism-allegations-to-human-rights-tribunal>

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I know Mr Jack from Trent University and I am ashamed to hear of the treatment he received at the OPP. He came to Canada alone. He worked harder than anyone I know in order to succeed. There were no free handouts. Academically he is brilliant. He speaks at least 3 languages. He is extremely fit. A serious, focused and honest man. Interested in people and willing to help others. The kind of person that other police departments recognised as an asset worth pursuing. It is wrong that Mr Jack was poorly treated by fellow officers due to his race. It is criminal negligence that management did not take sufficient action to correct the work environment and protect Mr Jack. Let's hope justice is found at this tribunal and that Canada doesn't let this individual down again.