

31 1974

✓ Officer-in-Charge, Weather Office, TORONTO.  
Officer-in-Charge, Weather Office, WINDSOR.

Regional Director, AES,  
Ontario Region

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION DE SECURITE
OUR FILE N REFERENCE  6754-159(OMB)
YOUR FILE V REFERENCE
DATE  May 31, 1974.

PUBLICITY - WINDSOR STORM

1. I refer to the storm of publicity on the above subject that followed the meeting called by the Mayor of Windsor on May 28, 1974.
2. I was reasonably satisfied with the meeting itself, though it was not as productive as I would have wished. I thought that the Mayor set the stage very well in his opening remarks, in which he clearly stated that the purpose was to examine the possible improvements in the local warning system, not to investigate any event that had taken place, and invited the media to participate, not just as reporters, but as experts in information dissemination.
3. Unfortunately, not all of the participants, took it this way, and the April 3 storm became, not just an example, but the main subject of discussion. I felt that far too much time was devoted to the dissemination in Windsor of the report of the tornado sighted at Flat Rock at 1940 E, and availability of American watch and warning messages, to the exclusion of discussion of what use was or might have been made by EMO and the media of the severe weather warnings that were issued and distributed by AES well before the event.
4. Nevertheless, I felt that the meeting aired diverse views and ideas, and exposed some misconceptions that should be corrected. As such, it could be useful input into further planning. I thought it ended on a reasonable note.
5. The very unfavourable publicity, including grossly misleading innuendoes, came as a surprise. I can only surmise that it stemmed from some individual motives plus the propensity of the media to seek the sensational.
6. There is not much point in joining battle with the media in public debate. Some subsequent interviews have been reported more objectively. Our strategy is to be patient, do our job and continue, whenever possible, to educate, dispel misunderstandings, cultivate cooperation, and endeavour to improve our system as need and circumstances permit.





SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION - DE SÉCURITÉ

OUR FILE — N/RÉFÉRENCE

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7. My main regret is on behalf of you and your staff, who did a thoroughly competent job on the day in question, and see only public criticisms as a reward. As seasoned weathermen, taking this sort of thing is one of the unwritten parts of our job, and I want you to know that I understand and share your feelings in this sort of a situation.

( R. C. GRAHAM )

Regional Director, Ontario Region,  
Field Services Directorate,  
Atmospheric Environment Service

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debate. Our strategy is to educate, dispel misunderstandings, cultivate cooperation, and endeavour to improve our system as we go along. We will continue to work with the media in public debate, and we will continue to work with the media more objectively, whenever possible.