

## Media Release

Nov. 17, 2015

### **Public Lecture by Hon. Wally Oppal, QC, on British Columbia's Missing Women Commission of Inquiry Thursday, Nov. 19 at 7 pm**

The person who led two of the most significant commissions of inquiry in Canada will be speaking at St. Thomas University on Thursday, Nov. 19 at 7:00 pm in the Kinsella Auditorium, McCain Hall.

The Hon. Wally Oppal, QC, will be speaking on "British Columbia's Missing Women Commission of Inquiry" in a lecture sponsored by the Endowed Chair in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

Mr. Justice Oppal was appointed as a Commissioner in 2010 to conduct an Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women. The Commission held almost 100 days of public hearings and forums in Aboriginal communities in Northern British Columbia. It allowed many victims and survivors of the Robert Pickton tragedies to testify and resulted in a report with 65 recommendations, dealing primarily with police reform. The report has led to many changes regarding the police treatment of vulnerable women, as well as a legislative change in redefining missing persons and policing responses to violence against women.

Oppal's working life has been dedicated to the pursuit of social justice and community safety.

In the early 1990s, he was appointed to conduct the Commission of Inquiry into Policing in British Columbia. The report "Bridging the Gap" led to many policing reforms including the establishment of the Office of the Complainant Commissioner for Public Complaints, guidelines for high speed pursuits, the creation of domestic violence response teams, promoting gender and Aboriginal multicultural diversity and the use-of-force guidelines. After twenty years, the report is still said to be the last word in policing in Canada.

In four years as a special prosecutor, he appeared as counsel on many high profile cases, including fifty homicide trials. Beginning in 1981, he has been appointed to various levels of the judiciary in British Columbia; the County Court, the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the British Columbia Court of Appeal. Oppal left the Court of Appeal in 2005 and was elected as an MLA and subsequently served as Attorney General of British Columbia and Minister of Multiculturalism. He is now senior counsel at Boughton Law.

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**Media Contact** – Jeffrey Carleton at (506) 452-0522 or [carleton@stu.ca](mailto:carleton@stu.ca).