

**Transcript****2015-04-06 Premier Davis****Premier:**

Thank you first of all for coming out this afternoon. I can tell you that I was shocked, deeply saddened yesterday to learn of the events that had taken place yesterday. This is just a terrible tragedy for so many reasons. You know my thoughts and prayers are with the Dunphy family, with the people of Mount Carmel in the area where this took place and with those that have been impacted by this very tragic event.

**Reporter:**

Premier what do you know about the threats that were made against you? What do you know about the investigation that your security detail were out investigating?

**Premier:**

Well until after this took place yesterday I wasn't aware of any of it. The protective services unit which is a joint force operation by the RNC and RCMP handle those types of matters. When a matter comes to their attention that's - that's a concern not only for me as Premier but cabinet ministers or it could be a senior official in government or it could be a visiting representatives from other provinces or out of the country. They deal with those matters and it's within their privy to do that and when they become aware of incidents like this they follow up and investigate. When they feel the need they share it with me and in this case, I wasn't aware that the officer was down there and investigating this particular matter.

**Reporter:**

And was there a perceived threat?

**Premier:**

Pardon me.

**Reporter:**

Was there a specific perceived threat against anybody?

**Premier:**

Well that would be part of the investigation. I wouldn't have that information as what was known to the officer at that time.

**Reporter:**

People are already raising questions about whether the RCMP based in this province can get to the bottom of what happened. What are your thoughts on the need for an independent police review?

**Premier:**

Well you know this involved an RNC officer and it occurred in the jurisdiction policed by the RCMP I think at this point in time it's too early to make that determination. It would be a decision that I think the RCMP would have to reach as part of their investigation.

**Reporter:**

Premier do you know if there is more to this than just what was on Twitter? Were there phone calls or letters? Was there anything more specific than what Mr. Dunphy put on social media?

**Premier:**

I don't know that.

**Reporter:**

And I am assuming you would have read that tweet by now. I've read the contents of those tweets. Did you view what Mr. Dunphy put on Twitter as any kind of a threat?

**Premier:**

You know when people put their hand up to enter politics and to do these types of roles you know sometimes that your life and your family life becomes an open book, you know, in so many ways. So quite often you become accustomed to people challenging us on policies. You know decisions we make and how we govern but you know it's upsetting when you see a comment made like that that's directed. You know, it's directed - it appeared to be directed towards me and another cabinet minister and also the people that are most important to us - our families. You know, I've got an 83 year old mother. I've got a wife and a child. I've got a family myself and you know this impacts them as well. You know, we quite often think about this. They never put their hand up. I put my hand up so that's disconcerting and there's no two ways about it that that causes some concern.

**Reporter:**

When you read a longer sequence of tweets though cause there's a bit of a rant there from Mr. Dunphy it doesn't appear to be a specific threat at anyone. It's more of a rant about the state of things as he sees it. Clearly there were words there though that were - that caught people's attention. Is that to you understanding mainly what caused the police to go out to Mitchell's Brook on Sunday?

**Premier:**

Again I don't have – I don't know what the officer knew or why or what led – you know what made him reach the decision that he had to go to Mr. Dunphy's. I don't have that information. That's all part of what the RCMP will investigate I am sure, so it would be just wrong for me to try and jump to that conclusion. It's important that we allow the police to fully conduct their investigation. It's important that we allow the RCMP to get all of the information, all of the evidence. It's their responsibility to analyze the facts of the case and the facts of what took place and for them to reach that decision. I think it would just be wrong for us to do that until we know all that information.

**Reporter:**

Have you spoken to the officer who is obviously a member of your detail? Have you spoken to him since the shooting?

**Premier:**

I had a – yeah, I had a conversation with him late last night.

**Reporter:**

How was he?

**Premier:**

You know, it's really difficult and I am not really in a position to assess how he is. I just you know, made a call to him to pass along my best regards to him, let him know I was thinking about him as well and you know, he's – I'm sure this is – I can only imagine where he is.

**Reporter:**

Did he give you any details of what had happened?

**Premier:**

No we had a relatively short – you know – it wasn't a long and detailed discussion. I called to offer him my – you know – my personal support to him. You know I've known him for some time as well so.

**Reporter:**

Were shots fired by the other – by Mr. Dunphy or was it just by the officer?

**Premier:**

I don't have that information. That's part of what the police are investigating.

**Reporter:**

Just to be clear when you talked about the tweets that were upsetting you are talking about the exchange on Good Friday on Mr. Dunphy's Twitter feeds. Is that correct?

**Premier:**

Well from time to time there's – there are comments made publically and you know, we are in a very different time today than we were two years ago, five years ago, ten years ago and through social media and through you know, news websites and so on. People quite often make very harsh and difficult comments. I leave it completely up to the police to follow-up and investigate those types of comments and matters. You know, one time it was a letter or a phone call would be what would be received. You know, we are in a very different, very different age today and in a very different place. So from time to time there are things to come to my attention that someone had made a comment or posted a comment or a position that's somewhat problematic or troublesome. But again, that is all left in the hands of the police to investigate. They determine what action they take. They determine what steps are appropriate but – and they look at these things from time to time when it comes to their attention.

**Reporter:**

Will this cause you to implement a new policy with regards to ministers having a personal Twitter account where they can tweet out about whatever they are doing or back benchers or even yourself? You have your own account where you say "last night I was at a certain event" if somebody wants to contact you there's no degree of separation then between you and that person.

**Premier:**

And people do contact us through social media, through Twitter and Facebook. You know, through Facebook there's a number of ways to do it. You know, a person could put their own posting on. They could put a comment on something that I've posted or they can send a direct message. So even through Facebook there's really three different ways that a person can contact you. So there's – there are so many different ways to contact an elected member today more so than there was before. So I haven't had any discussions about changing how we do that business or how that operates at this point in time. It's really up to the individual elected members to decide what role they play or what access or use of social media they have. It's really up to the individuals to do that. But you know, fair enough to say that we do live in a different time. We've seen some things that have taken place in our country in the last – within the last year - in the last number of months that have all caused us to have a second thought on how we do business and how we operate. But every person has a right to feel safe. No matter what your job is, no matter what your role is, everyone has a right to feel safe and should feel safe in that role that they play within our community – anywhere in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Reporter:**

Did you feel unsafe? You said everyone has a right to feel safe. Did you feel unsafe by what was said?

**Premier:**

Well you know, I wasn't aware of this until after this happened yesterday. So you know, I didn't put a – you know the lens that I have on was knowing what had transpired yesterday. So I am really not sure that I would be able to give you that fullest and fair assessment.

**Reporter:**

Wasn't there a suggestion that there was a mental health component and yet this was an RNC officer that apparently went in alone and with no backup? Does that raise any concerns for you?

**Premier:**

Well again you know I think that's – I think we have to wait until the investigation is completed first and I think - I'm sure that will all be part of it – of the investigation and the review that's conducted.

**Reporter:**

How often do incidents like this happen where there's threatening language used and the RNC is following up on something of this nature?

**Premier:**

Well you know it happens from time to time and you know, as was the case here. Sometimes there is something that comes to their attention that you know, I am completely unaware of and they go ahead and do the things that the RNC and the RCMP do in response to that. But you know, from time to time it comes up. I've experienced it before I was Premier on occasion and obviously now you know, this incident, this terrible incident has happened as well.

**Reporter:**

Will the size or scope of the security detail for you personally change now or other members who may be threatened?

**Premier:**

Well Fred you know, good question and fair question but you know we haven't – we always try to stay away from that and stay away from discussing the specifics of it. You know I can tell you that in discussions and talking to the RNC and RCMP since you know I became in this role we sometimes have discussions about their presence and when they should be utilized. You know, I like to go places by myself. Yesterday afternoon my wife and I spent the afternoon at a hockey game at the arena in Paradise and I was there – my wife and I with constituents and friends. You know, I had no staff, I had no security with me. That's the way I like to – you know I like to go about my life and do my role as an MHA as well and as Premier.

**Reporter:**

Do you think that's a good idea?

**Premier:**

Well you know, again, I can tell you that the RCMP and RNC have had numerous discussions with me about that.

**Reporter:**

And your wife I'm sure.

**Premier:**

And my wife as well, yup, and it is something we've got to give very serious consideration to. We are – I think it's very fair to say we are in a very different time today than we were you know, a number of years ago.

**Reporter:**

Have you contacted the Dunphy family directly to offer condolences?

**Premier:**

No I haven't, no.

**Reporter:**

Premier, just to make sure I am clear on what prompted the officer to go to Mitchell's Brook it was that tweet and it was the police doing their assessment of it that they said this is something of more to follow up. Is that your understanding of what happened?

**Premier:**

See I don't have all the facts at this point in time David and I think it would be wrong for me to try and assume why the officer went there. I don't know what - the tweet was, I believe, on Friday and the officer was working during the weekend. So I don't know what information that he had available to him or what led him to the decision to go visit Mr. Dunphy yesterday afternoon.

**Reporter:**

But just to be clear it wasn't you who actually contacted the RNC and say you want this followed through on?

**Premier:**

That's correct. Yeah I had - I didn't know anything about this. I didn't know the tweet existed or the comment existed. I didn't know that the police were following up on the comment. I had no idea that the officer had gone there. I didn't know any of it until after this incident occurred yesterday afternoon.

**Reporter:**

There are hundreds of tweets where Mr. Dunphy references you and your Twitter hashtag. Did you know him before this incident? Were you used to seeing his tweets? Had you even in fact even muted him because he was tweeting you so much?

**Premier:**

Well just to be clear there was two Twitter accounts. One is Premier of NL and the other one is my own Paul Davis Twitter account. So I have access to and operate the Paul Davis Twitter account myself and sometimes some staff do that as well but the Premier of NL Twitter account is primarily handled by staff in my office and I don't have regular view of it unless there's something there that needs to be brought to my attention. I generally don't know what comments are on it or what response is there.

**Reporter:**

Do you know if members of your staff however referred those tweets from Friday to your security detail or to anyone else?

**Premier:**

Yes.

**Reporter:**

They did.

**Reporter:**

Okay so it was your staff that alerted police?

**Premier:**

Yes. Okay. Thank you.

## CERTIFICATE

I, Susan Khrapal, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the media interview given by Paul Davis on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015 and was transcribed by me to the best of my ability.

Dated at St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2017.

Susan Khrapal  
Cox & Palmer