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# Defunct narcotics squad still facing accusations

By Debbie Howlett  
 Of the Emerald

Steve Makinson, a 31 year-old mechanic, had just finished his shift at the Springfield Weyerhaeuser paper mill. He and a friend decided to stop at the Marcola Tavern for a few video games and a cold o.j.

Before Makinson could even deposit his quarter in the video game he heard a commotion near the pool tables. The next thing he heard was a man shouting. "Freeze! I mean freeze, motherfuckers, or we'll blow your heads off," came the command.

Makinson froze in tracks, he was bent over in his chair, reaching for the quarter he'd dropped on the floor. For better than 60 seconds Makinson tried to discern who this group of men, armed with shotguns, were. Makinson cautiously looked up over the edge of the video machine and promptly felt the cold steel barrel of a gun sitting just above his left ear. "I said freeze," barked the man.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" Makinson begged.

"I thought, 'Oh God! Please don't let me die like this,'" says Makinson recalling the early morning hours of March 23, 1982.

The police raid Makinson describes netted the Lane Interagency Narcotics Team two arrests. Makinson was neither one of the men LINT sought, nor was he one of the men arrested. He was, in the vernacular, an innocent bystander.

But Makinson claims he was much more than an innocent bystander. He says he was a victim, and he believes that strongly enough to have organized a group called Citizens Opposed to a Police State, COPS for short.

Makinson has made allegations that the now defunct LINT team, and almost all of Lane County's law enforcement officials, have used more than just excessive force or police brutality. Makinson says law enforcement officials, especially LINT, have put themselves above the law, turning Lane County into a police state.

"I feared for my life," Makinson says of the Marcola Tavern raid. "These guys were getting off on this. They enjoyed what they were doing."

But not everyone sees Eugene as a police state. Certainly not law enforcement officials.

Makinson is "a paranoid individual in the wrong place at the right time," counters county sheriff Dave Burks. "I find nothing wrong with (LINT's) tactics. If anyone was hurt it was psychological." Burks did admit that the narcotics team could have used what seem to be harsh tactics, but the first thing a cop thinks of is self-protection.

"I make no apologies for what happened at Marcola.

"It's unfortunate — it happens all over the U.S. There's paranoia even among the narcotics agents," says Burks. "If we have to move and move in a hurry, the risks (of making a mistake) increase. But the first concern of an officer is his safety.

"You probably scare the hell out of an innocent person. You probably scare the hell out of

criminals."

Some of Lane County's citizens do agree, to some extent, with Makinson. Wendy Curry and Kenneth Willyard filed suit against the City of Eugene and six Eugene Police Officers, some of whom were LINT officers.

The suit charges the Eugene officers "surrounded and forcibly entered... with weapons drawn" a Springfield residence where Curry, her three children, Willyard and his three children were attending a birthday party. The suit also charges officers ordered the Willyards and the Currys into the yard "while yelling obscenities at Plaintiffs and other guests." Further, the suit alleges all of the people named in the suit, except Kenneth Willyard, were "menaced and held at gunpoint" by the officers.

None of the plaintiffs had done anything illegal, nor had they offered any resistance. None of the plaintiffs were aware that the officers, dressed in plainclothes, were in fact police officers, according to the complaint.

The officers had another "wrong address" when they burst into the house of two elderly women. Dorothy Merwin and her mother, Nellie Ryan, at 1:30 a.m. in March of 1980.

LINT officers followed a suspected cocaine dealer to Merwin's home, where they saw the suspect walk onto the porch and disappear into the darkness of the

porch, apparently into the house. The officers woke a judge to get a search warrant and headed back to the house.

Merwin reported seeing what she thought were a bunch of hoodlums, who identified themselves as police officers, on the porch of her house. Before Merwin opened the door it came crashing in toward her. The officers entered and searched the house, allowing Merwin to awaken and explain what was happening to her 92-year-old mother.

The police found no cocaine and no suspect. The only thing they discovered was they had made a mistake.

Apparently the suspect had gotten onto the dark porch and slipped around the side of the house to the house next door.

Makinson believes these instances are enough to warrant a full scale investigation. He hired a Eugene lawyer who recommended that Makinson drop the whole matter. Makinson then retained an attorney from Roseburg and he says they are in the process of initiating a recall petition against Horton.

The problems with Makinson are not the only ones the narcotics team have faced. Stanley Meyers, a Springfield officer assigned to head the LINT unit, was recently dismissed from his job after apparently perjuring himself before a Grand Jury.

Meyers was questioned by the Grand Jury in connection with a pound and a half of cocaine that was switched with a "neutral substance" earlier this year.

The questions the Grand Jury asked were regar-

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