

colleague with outstretched hand and quietly persuaded him to hand over his revolver and accompany him to the detachment. The next day the emotionally disturbed man was taken to the mental hospital for examination. He later died of a brain tumor.

In a case of this nature one might expect to see newspaper headlines like "policeman runs amok, shoots up café," or something equally sensational. But instead the media zeroed in on the heroism of the duty constable and had nothing but sympathy for the other unfortunate man. The waiter's wound was only superficial and he soon recovered.

I certainly needed all the media cooperation I could muster during my last year in the Force prior to retirement in 1953. It was spent in Vancouver as Section NCO for Vancouver and the Lower Mainland area, a job involving for the most part, monthly detachment inspections.

But there was another, and rather unusual, aspect to this job — the destruction of liquor exhibits seized by the Vancouver City Police, the New Westminster Police Force and the RCMP Vancouver Liquor Squad. This duty had for some reason or other been taken away from the city forces by the B.C. Attorney General's Department and handed over to the RCMP.

Once a month, generally accompanied by a young constable, I would take a police van to the rear of the city police stations and load up with booze. Sealed and unmarked bottles were taken to the Liquor Board warehouse, later to be placed on liquor store shelves for re-sale. A lucrative business for the government — selling the booze twice, first to the bootlegger, then to the public or perhaps again to the bootlegger. Conceivably the same bottle could be turned over several times.

Unsealed bottles or bottles and beer cases initialled by the seizing officer for identification purposes were taken to the city dump in South Vancouver for destruction. As could be expected, this was a job fraught with temptation, and with sadness — the temptation to stock one's liquor cabinet and sadness at having to destroy perfectly good liquor.

These emotions were shared by the incredulous workmen at the dump as they watched us smash bottle after bottle against the rocks, a new twist to serving it "on the rocks." They were literally drooling. One of them got off his tractor and down on his knees in mock supplication, begging me to leave "just one bottle" unbroken.

One might assume that throwing a beer carton against rocks would break all bottles. Not so, I learned one day when I returned unexpectedly and found the dump crew having a beer break instead of their usual coffee break. Since we were on city property I had no jurisdiction, nor did I have the inclination to spoil their fun.

Naturally I didn't want any publicity in connection with this particular part of my duties and tried to guard against any leak to the press. Just visualize what a front page picture it would have made: two policemen smashing liquor bottles with an audience of wistful workmen. But in the end the press caught up with me.

Ray Monroe, the hottest headline hunter ever to haunt the newsrooms of the two Vancouver dailies, happened to be assigned by the Province to the North Vancouver police beat where I was detachment commander at the time. As always I wished to establish a good working relationship with the press. I told Monroe and other reporters that if they would keep their noses out of investigations in progress, I would provide them with prompt and detailed information when I could do