

second language, or indeed don't have the aptitude to learn the language. If I'm not mistaken, exclusive of "HQ", 60% of the Force is west of the Manitoba/Ontario border, where there is some need for the French language, obviously, but it's not a predominant concern. Because of the services provided at this headquarters, we will have to ensure that they are provided in both official languages as well as giving people of both language groups a feeling that they can be comfortable working in a headquarters environment in their own language. One of the other issues we're following up on is the Cadet Official Languages Training Program. We are having discussions with Treasury Board to see how this can best be achieved. The over-all objective is to provide an introduction to the second official language to all members who come to the Force. It is really too early to say exactly how the program will be fleshed out; however, we hope to be able to achieve the primary objective even if it only means giving each young recruit an opportunity to speak or learn his or her second language for three or four weeks. At least they will have a base on which they can build — if they choose. I think it would be a healthy change for the organization.

**Quarterly** How do you see future media relations with the Force?

**Commissioner** When one talks about something like media relations, you can only base your remarks on what has been your own experience. I have told a number of reporters, who have been surprised to hear me say it, that my own experience with the media has always been very positive. We are going to undertake an examination of the total area of communications to see if we can somehow improve the system. My own view is that when a responsible reporter is told that in the case of a particular

investigation, these are the facts, and because of the confidentiality of the investigation, or whatever, I can't tell him any more — he should accept that as being the best you can do. I think we are going to undertake an examination of that role, to see if we can improve things a little bit. My own style will be to be as helpful and as open to the press as I can. To the extent that each reporter treats me responsibly, then I'll continue to deal with him or her in that way. The other thing is — we must market the things we do well more effectively. A communications expert could help us with that as well. As you know from reading the press, it seems that people read only those things we have done wrong, or where some controversy exists suggesting the RCMP is less than professional. Yet, when you realize we are an organization of 16,000 peace officers, and if each one of those individuals has contact with half a dozen people from the public a day, then our police-to-public contact must run into the millions over the course of a week. Yet, we do not receive a large number of complaints, so obviously we're doing our work well. I think the Canadian public largely realize and expect that we will discharge our responsibilities in a professional way, and so long as we do, we will enjoy public respect and public support, and the future of the RCMP will not be in jeopardy. At the same time, however, if we neglect our public responsibilities, and if we lose the confidence and respect of the people of Canada, we would soon be replaced. I can think of nothing more important for a Commissioner of the RCMP, than guarding the public trust in our organization, which was built and maintained by the generations before us, as well as those now serving. If I do that and nothing else — I think my tenure as Commissioner will have been a success.

**Quarterly** Thank you very much Commissioner, for giving this interview. ■