

Every reasonable precaution is being taken to cope with the situation. By loose and irresponsible talk, rumour-mongers retard the work of the police and advance the odious aims of enemy propagandists. Although it is unlikely that the rumour annoyance can be entirely remedied, loyal citizens can do much to abate it, by ignoring street-corner babble, and discouraging the circulation of falsehoods by others. One other thing: the telephone is such an easy method of communication that police have been seriously hampered, of late, by the excessive number of calls received, especially in the larger urban centres. A telephone call ordinarily is considered an unsatisfactory way of transmitting serious information to the police. Telephone messages hastily jotted down by a busy policeman are not as sound a basis for inquiry as written accounts which, aside from relieving the present overburdened wires, give in black and white, names, addresses, dates, places and full details. The correct name and address of the complainant or informant is most important as anonymous letters and telephone calls have been sent by mischievous parties deliberately intending to hamper the police. If persons with worthwhile grievances or information would put them in writing and send them through the mail, reserving the telephone for emergency cases, they would be facilitating the work of the police tremendously.

Events call for coolness, sanity and self-control. The strategy of subversive agitators within our boundaries may be defeated by composure and an unruffled determination to stem the panic evil at its source. While the Force is most anxious that anyone who thinks he has information of importance should feel free to furnish it, co-operation and vigilance by the public along these lines would assist materially in avoiding confusion.

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In an organization as widespread and complex as the R.C.M. Police, no one could hope to acquire a thorough knowledge of all its various phases and branches. Individual members, though, must have a complete and intimate knowledge of their particular spheres. Indeed they should be experts in their limited fields. The poet Whittier described the complete and extensive knowledge the "Barefoot Boy" had of his little world. Knowing nothing of world politics, history and other human perplexities, the farmer's lad nevertheless could lead one to the ripest strawberries, the best fishing streams, the shadiest nooks—all because it was his everyday sphere, his daily life. No one could hope to equal overnight the boy's close understanding of his own domain.

Members of the Force on detachment are well situated for gaining an appreciation of conditions around them. They are on the ground; and it follows that their discretion, based as it is on actual knowledge, may be relied on in emergencies. From the lowest right up to the highest ranks, each of us, without doubt, possesses ideas which we think would increase the efficiency of our special niche.

It was in order to draw on this fund of first-hand expert opinion and experience that our Commissioner inaugurated the Gold Medal Essay Competition.