

Force, paid tribute to the people who had come forward to assist in the investigation. He particularly singled out Mrs. Trout who discovered the body of the murdered man. "Had it not been for the body being located during the early part of the investigation, it is quite likely that it would have remained undiscovered for some time as subsequent snowfalls would probably have hidden it from view until the spring thaw, and this would have greatly hampered us in bringing the case to a successful conclusion," he wrote.

This case convinced me — and many other police officers — of the value of good media-police relations, and I always attempted to foster a relationship of trust and confidence with the media wherever I worked. I felt it was essential to obtain community support in carrying out police duties.

In 1952, when I lectured on public relations to refresher training classes in Vancouver, I looked at both sides of the media-police relationship. For instance, reporters are naturally out to get all the information they can. That's their job. The policeman's job is to bring his investigation to a successful conclusion. These two objectives are not always compatible, though often they can be, as in the Heipel case. Obviously, newshounds on the scent of something really juicy will settle for second or third-hand — sometimes even inaccurate — information if unable to get the facts. On the other hand, the investigator has to guard against premature revelations for fear of damaging his case.

While reporters may complain about tight-lipped cops, the policemen have beefs against the media too, many of them well founded. They complain that reporters are always pestering them for news; that they are a hindrance to the investigation, especially at the scenes of crimes where evidence has to be

preserved; that radio bulletins bring the curious to scenes of crimes and fires; that the media seem to enjoy reporting bad news involving policemen — they go out of their way to identify a holdup man as "a former policeman" but they don't say "former sailor" or former anything else.

I sympathized with the frustration of my colleagues, but tried to stress that time spent in developing good working relationships could pay dividends in a crunch. I would tell about an experience I had while in charge of the North Battleford Detachment. Every morning of the work week I would receive a telephone call from Mrs. Whetton, the local stringer for the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix and a former newspaper woman. No matter how busy I was, I would take time to give her any tidbits of news I felt free to reveal.

I had the same arrangement with the local newspaper and with the local radio station. In return, we received good coverage for our work with the young people in the city and other forms of preventive police work we were undertaking, as well as in cases under investigation where publicity was required.

But the attitude of the media toward us was best demonstrated in a rather sad episode involving a young constable. One night at about midnight he got out of his bed and, dressed only in shorts, took his service revolver and dashed across the street to a café filled with people who had just come out of the local cinema. He fired a shot which ricocheted from the cement floor and struck a waiter in the leg.

He was holding the terrified patrons at bay when two duty constables entered the café. He now pointed his revolver at them and ordered them to hand over their guns.

Instead of complying, one of the constables slowly approached his