

Commanding Officer's Communique

November 4, 2008

No doubt many of you have read the Commissioner's and Deputy Commissioner Pacific Region's communiqués of earlier today concerning the recent publication of a work called, "Dispersing the Fog", by Paul Palango. Unfortunately, the book is full of many inaccuracies and, as a result, dubious conclusions about the RCMP, and the fine men and women who work here.

As part of his research, Mr. Palango spoke to some current and retired Chiefs of police across Canada, including Chief Frank Beazley of Halifax and former Chief Edgar MacLeod of Cape Breton. While I do not wish to burden you with context and background, I believe it is important to state that open and professional discussions amongst police partners is the foundation for trust and effective service to citizens. To that end I have met with Chief Beazley and expressed my and your concerns over comments attributed to him. Chief Beazley stated he believes some of his comments were taken out of context and he confirmed his, and his management team's support, for working collaboratively with us in an integrated manner.

I have further discussed this book with senior officials within the Province, alerting them to my concern for its inaccuracies and questionable conclusions. Although the RCMP went out of its way to provide access and accurate information to the author prior to publication, it was not considered. We have a long tradition of innovative and effective policing approaches; indeed, some of our work around Crime Reduction is literally driving crime down by double digit percentages annually, making communities safer and healthier places to live. That said, we are not perfect. When fault is found in our actions or approaches, we must immediately change practice, improve training, and learn constantly; this assures improvement and the ongoing professionalism of our organization.

A year ago, Cst. Sandy Savage of "J" Division shared with me a front cover article published in the *Star Weekly Magazine* entitled, "Can the Mounties' new boss make them popular again?" The story highlighted that "[t]he famous force in recent years has lost some hard-won prestige. Its [employees] are the same high calibre, its principles are unchanged, but its public support has weakened, and with it, morale and effectiveness."¹ The story was published in July, 1960! We

¹Alan Phillips, *The Star Weekly Magazine*, July 16, 1960, p.3.

are not the same organization we were in 1960, or even 2000 for that matter. We learn, change and grow.

I want to thank you for your hard work and commitment to making this the best police agency in the world. It is by working together at all levels, learning from our mistakes, and demonstrating great value to the communities where we serve, that trust and support of citizens are earned.

Steve Graham, A/Commr.
Commanding Officer
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