

BETHEL
CHURCH

The facts as noted by Lieutenant Bourget are correct.

Shortly after noon, April 1, 1969, I was advised that calls were being received regarding the New Bethel Church shooting incident, to the extent that our emergency IMPACT board was becoming seriously overloaded and encountering a backlog of requests for police services. The same situation was being experienced in the Commissioner's Office where the normal complement of office personnel were unable to handle the volume of calls being received. Due to the critical nature of our IMPACT board it was apparent that some method of relieving this facility from handling these calls would have to be made immediately available.

In the absence of the Director of Technical Services I contacted the Deputy Superintendent direct and advised him of the problem. It was determined by the Deputy Superintendent and myself that the best procedure would be, as we have done on several other occasions in the past where a large number of opinion type calls were being received, to establish a particular telephone line in the Communications Center for the purpose of handling these calls. This would relieve the IMPACT board overload and further allow the Commissioner's Office personnel to return to regular office routine. Bell telephone line 224-4425 was reserved for this purpose, and upon his return the Director of Technical Services was advised of the problem and the action being taken.

The Communications Center continued to operate this line for the purpose of accepting and analyzing calls from concerned citizens regarding the incident. Calls received that appeared to indicate the caller had information to offer regarding the incident were transferred to the Homicide Bureau. Callers wishing to express only an opinion regarding the incident were recorded, if the caller wished, by name and address on a handwritten yellow lined paper pad, (C of D 4ru), by the officers assigned to this allocated line. After allocation of this line it was noted that our emergency IMPACT facility returned to normal operation and the backup of emergency calls was eliminated.

In the late morning or early afternoon of April 8, 1969, I was advised a call was received questioning the propriety of the department accepting calls regarding the handling of the New Bethel incident. This call accompanied by rumors of circulated flyers and bulletin board notices being distributed around the city by unknown persons suggesting the number 224-4425 was to be used for signing a petition for impeachment proceedings, indicated that the allocated line was being circumvented for other than the original purposes.

The Deputy Superintendent was engaged in a conference at this time and not immediately available, we therefore, pending the Deputy Superintendent's opinion, instructed our officer at the allocated line to continue the operation; exercising careful judgement in his conversations with callers.