

standing that fact, the master of the ship goes on to list eight points which I shall read into the record:

(1) Roughly manhandling the crew and damaging their belongings.

(2) Deliberately breaking padlocks and suitcases while members of the crew were endeavouring to open them.

(3) Deliberate and quite unnecessarily breaking a framed religious picture.

(4) Brutally dragging an injured seaman out of the infirmary bed and throwing the mattress and bedclothes on the floor, despite the screams of pain from this man.

(5) Entering the officers' rooms while they were asleep and ransacking the contents of the rooms, which included their own clothing and belongings, as well as ship's documents and papers.

(6) Breaking ship's doors and padlocks, again while we were in process of opening them with the proper keys.

(7) Confiscating articles that had been stamped and legalized by the Customs in St. John's.

(8) Seizing six weapons found on board, three of which were hunting guns, bought by me at a St. John's store and legalized by the Canadian authorities, and three other pistols which were ship's weapons, given to the ship by the Portuguese authorities, which until then, I had not had time or opportunity to legalize.

These are eight very important charges made by the master of this vessel against the RCMP for their conduct in the course of their search of this ship. Imagine, if you will, a ship that had run into difficulties in heavy seas off the coast of Labrador, made for what has been the traditional haven of the Portuguese fleet, the port of St. John's, got into that traditional haven and the crew considered themselves lucky to be there. They were in the process of getting some well-earned rest when at midnight, to use the words of the master of the ship, in a Gestapo way of doing things 15 to 20 members of Canada's finest, the RCM Police entered this ship on legitimate business. They had ample evidence to indicate that smuggling had in fact taken place. The master concedes that in his letter when he says:

Unfortunately, without my knowledge and despite strict orders from the Portuguese authorities, one member of my crew had sold to two St. John's citizens four cases of whisky, in all a total of 48 bottles.

I recognize that this took place; but that does not for a moment excuse the way the RCMP conducted its search, disregarded the personal property of members of the crew, completely disregarded the ship's officers and showed a total disregard for a crew member who was sick in the infirmary. The captain was forced out of his bed at great discomfort

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and with much pain, and a search was made of his belongings.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard):** Order, please.

**Mr. McGrath:** The captain is prepared to document this evidence by affidavit.

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, the question asked by the hon. member was: Has the Solicitor General received complaints of what appears to be excessive harassment by the RCMP of Portuguese ships in the Port of St. John's? That was a general question about the treatment of Portuguese ships in the harbour of St. John's. That was investigated and found to be without foundation. I shall have a word to say about that in a moment.

Tonight the hon. member added a new dimension and a new series of charges as to the conduct of officers making a search in a proper, authorized way in the course of their duty. The facts are that in the course of regular harbour duty a truck was discovered being loaded from that ship with certain cases and that resulted in a search being made. The search resulted in proceedings under the Customs Act, and fines. There is no difference on that point.

As to the general question asked, I think I should make it clear at once that I know and appreciate the hon. member's concern for the treatment of Portuguese ships in St. John's harbour, because I think it is common knowledge that the conduct of Portuguese sailors—and I think I can say this in all fairness to other sailors—is among the very best in the sailing world. The conduct in that fleet is very good. Of 382 Portuguese ships entering the port last year, only six were searched. I think there is no complaint on that score.

The new charges brought forward tonight affect another subject which is quite separate in my mind, that is, the conduct of officers of the Canadian police forces in affecting that search. I have had no opportunity to check that at all. I will be very glad to have the matter checked at once and quite thoroughly, because there is an adequate procedure for proper disciplinary action if the charges are well-founded. That I will undertake to do. As to the other matter of there being any reflection on the conduct of Portuguese ships in the harbour, I repeat that this fleet is famous for its good conduct in that harbour. Far from there being any feeling of antagonism toward it, there is an opposite feeling, I think, on the