

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

island. He therefore went across to the island in his own boat, and there found that Corporal Smart and his party had never arrived. It was then realized that some serious accident must have occurred.

At about 9.30 a.m. Sunday, June 8, Mr. Donald Thompson of Foxden road, Don Mills, noticed the patrol boat floating partly submerged and pushed it ashore at Georgina island, where it was shortly thereafter spotted and examined by members of the R.C.M.P.

The boat is a 14-ft. Peterborough "Venus", purchased by the police in August, 1957, and equipped with a 35 horsepower Johnson outboard motor. When found the motor was still attached but the windshield on the boat had been broken, and the walkie-talkie radio, seat backs, and other equipment were missing. The spotlight had been torn clear of the deck but was still dangling by its wires. I should add that the boat carried two life jackets, four life cushions and a fire extinguisher, all of the approved type, equipment specified in the small boat regulations. The manufacturers rate the boat's maximum load as 975 pounds and the craft is designed to carry a 35 horsepower outboard motor. The total weight carried on this fatal night was within the maximum figure referred to.

On Sunday afternoon the body of Corporal Smart was found in the water in the general area where the boat was first sighted, which was about two miles from the shore of the northwest point of Georgina island. The body had on a life jacket and this apparently had kept it afloat. The bodies of the other men have not as yet been found and the search is continuing. An inquest is under way.

One life jacket and four life cushions were later found floating in the general area where the boat was recovered. The water at this point is deep, and on the night in question the water temperature was about 52 degrees on the surface and 47 degrees a few feet down. There were intermittent squalls during the night. When the patrol left the mainland the weather was fair and the water reasonably smooth in the area from which the boat set out.

As I stated earlier, we can only conjecture what happened when these men lost their lives. We do know, however, that Corporal Smart was an experienced and thoroughly responsible non-commissioned officer who knew the district well, while Constable Farough, the man operating the boat, was a competent boatman and had handled an identical boat all last season in that particular area without any difficulty. The duty being carried out was a normal one and of a nature where the detailed arrangements are left to the N.C.O. in charge. We can only conjecture that one of the squalls caught the

boat suddenly, perhaps broadside, and threw the men into the water without warning. It would seem that Corporal Smart managed to grab a life jacket, while the other men did not, or that if they did, they were unable to retain them after the accident took place.

There has been some suggestion that the men may have been handicapped when they were thrown into the water by the R.C.M.P. uniform of breeches and boots. Actually the regulations of the force require that members on air or water patrols dress in loose trousers and low boots, and this is the type of uniform Corporal Smart and his men were wearing on the night the patrol was made.

Constables Farough, Perry and Ransom had each been awarded the bronze medallion of the Royal Life Saving Society for swimming and lifesaving ability. Corporal Smart had been active in various sports and was a cub-master and scoutmaster. He also had taken swimming instruction during his course of training.

I think I should add a word of thanks for the spontaneous assistance given—and which is still being given—by the people of the area from the time it was learned that the patrol was missing, and for the unlimited co-operation afforded by the township police, the Sutton police, the Ontario provincial police, the Ontario department of lands and forests, and the R.C.A.F. search and rescue service. I should also like to mention the offer of the four men who had earlier that evening, June 7, been arrested by Corporal Smart and his men. These four men, when they learned of the situation on Sunday morning, as they know the area well, begged to be released so they could take part in the search. Arrangements to this end were made and their offer was gratefully accepted.

Hon. members will, I know, wish to join me in expressing to the next of kin and families of the deceased men the heartfelt sympathy of this house in the loss they have sustained through the tragic death of their loved ones in the course of the discharge of their duty.

**NATIONAL DEFENCE****H.M.C.S. "CORNWALLIS"—INQUIRY AS TO TAXATION OF RESIDENTS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Alexis Caron (Hull):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Defence or to the Minister of Justice. I do not know exactly to whom my question should be directed, but I sent notice this morning of my intention to ask it.

On June 1 the county of Annapolis, Nova Scotia, issued tax bills for poll and property