

*Inquiries of the Ministry***TRADE****REPORTED VISIT TO CANADA OF MISSION FROM
COMMUNIST CHINA**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): I would like to ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce whether he could comment on a report that a mission from communist China is now in this country and has been holding discussions with the Canadian wheat board, and will have discussions with officials of the Department of Trade and Commerce on the question of trade with China?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce): My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that there are two representatives of communist China in this country endeavouring to enlarge trade between our two countries. I have had no direct word with the wheat board with regard to whether these representatives have actually met with the board. I will, however, be meeting with the board, I hope in a day or two, and will ask what, if anything, has transpired.

My understanding at the moment is that another cargo of wheat was sold to mainland China as a result of the visit of these representatives of communist China, who may be meeting with other people throughout the country with the general objective of encouraging trade between our two countries.

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**STATEMENT ON REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON
DROWNING OF FIVE MEMBERS OF FORCE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, on June 10 last the hon. member for Vancouver East asked me if I could give the house any information regarding the tragic drowning of five members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police while on patrol duty on lake Simcoe. Because of the unusual nature of this tragedy and because of the widespread concern it has aroused, perhaps hon. members might wish me to make a full statement at this time. Precisely what happened when this terrible accident occurred we may never be able to say, as there were no survivors, but I shall give the house such facts as we have been able to ascertain.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police has a responsibility for the enforcement of federal statutes which includes enforcement of the Indian Act, the Excise Act and the Canada Shipping Act. Work relating to these acts has frequently taken patrols of the force into the lake Simcoe area and, indeed, there is

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

a regular detachment at Orillia. Georgina island, which lies at the southern end of the lake, is an Indian reserve. It has been necessary to have patrols visit this island from time to time, as well as the adjoining stretch of mainland from Jacksons point to Virginia beach.

These patrols have had to deal with complaints and information reaching the force as to violations of the federal acts I have mentioned, and particularly as to instances of drunkenness and public disorder. I do not want to give the impression that serious disorders have occurred, but circumstances have called for the attention of police patrols, and the size of the patrol in each case is dictated by the circumstances. Such patrols have, of necessity, to be made either by day or by night.

On Saturday evening, June 7, 1958, Corporal H. M. Smart, who was stationed in Toronto but who had a general responsibility for overseeing the work in the lake Simcoe area, took five constables with him from Toronto and proceeded to Beaverton. There he met Constable Farough and Constable Perry of the Orillia detachment, who had travelled to this point by car, bringing with them the patrol boat on a trailer. Some work was carried out in the Beaverton-Sutton area and, indeed, four arrests under the Indian Act were made early in the evening.

Later Corporal Smart, taking with him in the patrol boat Constables Farough and Perry of the Orillia detachment, and Constables Melynychuk and Ransom from Toronto, left the mainland and headed for Georgina island. He left Constables McDonald, Kilcup and Smith from Toronto behind in the police car, the intention being that they would later meet the party on its return from the island, in the meantime carrying out certain duties on the mainland. There was a portable radio in the patrol boat and a radio in the police car.

After some hours without any kind of contact whatever from Corporal Smart and his party in the patrol boat, Constables McDonald and Kilcup drove back toward Virginia beach from Jacksons point, watching for some sign of the boat, thinking that its radio might have gone dead and that it might have reached the mainland at some unarranged point. They had no success and eventually arrived at Virginia beach, where they met another member of the force, Constable Legere, working in another patrol boat. Constable Legere, when he heard that Corporal Smart and party were overdue, became concerned, feeling that they might have run into some unexpected difficulty in carrying out their work on the