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PRELUDE HONG KONG MOTHER
BY CLAIRE McDERMOTT

PEIPING, AUG. 12. (REUTERS)-MRS. MARY DOWNEY OF NEW BRITAIN, CONN., ARRIVED IN COMMUNIST CHINA TODAY TO VISIT HER IMPRISONED SON.

OFFICIALS IN CANTON SAID SHE REGISTERED IN THE AICHUNG (LOVE OF MASSES) HOTEL THERE ON HER ARRIVAL FROM HONG KONG. TOMORROW SHE FLIES TO PEIPING, WHERE HER 30-YEAR OLD SON JOHN IS SERVING A LIFE SENTENCE FOR ALLEGED ESPIONAGE DURING THE KOREAN WAR.

MRS. DOWNEY, WHO HAS A TWO-WEEK VISA, LAST SAW HER SON IN 1958 WHEN SHE CAME TO CHINA WITH TWO OTHER AMERICAN MOTHERS WHO HAD SONS IMPRISONED ON SPYING CHARGES.

MEANWHILE, 71-YEAR OLD WILLIAM WALSH OF CUMBERLAND, MD., LEFT SHANGHAI TODAY AFTER THREE VISITS TO HIS IMPRISONED BROTHER, 69-YEAR OLD BISHOP JAMES WALSH WHO WAS CONVICTED OF SPYING IN MARCH AND GIVEN A 20-YEAR SENTENCE.

WALSH WAS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN CANTON SUNDAY ON HIS WAY TO HONG KONG, MISSING MRS. DOWNEY IN CANTON. THEY HAVE NEVER MET BUT THEY DISCUSSED EACH OTHER'S CASES BY TELEPHONE IN THE UNITED STATES.

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