

Canada Shipping Act

but which have a temporary population in the summer months, when an accident takes place there is the problem of how to get in touch with the authorities who can help save lives. In respect of water accidents, as is said, time is of the essence. Over the years we have heard the excuse given by the officials of the Department of Transport that all one need do is phone the R.C.A.F. Trenton, the provincial police or somebody else. The average person, however, does not know about this. If an accident should take place in a major city like the great city of Toronto or some other similar place, there is no problem in getting in touch with someone who is responsible. The situation is quite different, however, in some of the small summer resorts where there is perhaps only one policeman or none at all and the people do not know who to contact if a boat should upset or catch fire or if some other accident should occur. Nobody knows what to do. It might be helpful if people knew they could contact such organizations as the provincial police or perhaps the search and rescue unit at Trenton.

I had hoped, when these amendments were presented, something would be done to provide a remedy for this situation. I hope when the bill reaches the committee a recommendation similar to the one which I shall propose might be considered. One of the suggestions I would propose is one I have made before on a number of occasions. This involves the employment of university students. Goodness knows at the present time university students are in need of jobs to help them continue with their education. During the summer months, from the middle of June to the middle of September, university students might be given jobs at these summer resort areas. After a brief period of training the students could be appointed to be at the water areas of the summer resorts at all times so that if anything should happen they would know who to call on for help. The volunteer power boat squadrons do a wonderful job in this regard. The student would be able to contact this squadron, the provincial police, the R.C.M.P. or some other authority.

In addition, perhaps the student could help enforce the existing regulations under the Canada Shipping Act. At the present time much of this work is left to the R.C.M.P. The R.C.M.P. has a great many other duties, and I think perhaps more important duties to perform. This would seem to be the type of operation a student appointee could carry out during the summer months. He could see that the safety regulations are being observed and

perhaps could be given authority to help enforce some of these regulations, particularly in heavily populated areas where boats are operated often at excessive speeds. There would appear to be little control over the speed of boats in harbours and waters where people are swimming or operating canoes and sailboats.

● (8:50 p.m.)

I am sorry to say that we do have young people who have little regard for the safety of others, who are out to show off, zipping up and down in high-speed power boats. This is very dangerous. I think this is a matter that could very well be regulated by the government. Without elaborating further, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the details could be worked out.

I think the general principle should be this. In areas of Canada with inland waters where there are large summer populations, many of whom have boats, a number of students could be employed in a safety program. These would be seasonal jobs. Our university students need jobs, particularly this year when there is a cutting down of the employment of students. Lengthy training would not be needed for such a program; several days would be quite adequate. There would be plenty of time to do it, because the holiday season has not yet started. I hope the government will pay some attention to this proposal.

I think these people should be given jurisdiction in certain areas—some places, of course, would require more supervision than others—to act as contacts in case of an accident. They would be able to get in touch with existing agencies such as the R.C.A.F., provincial police, power squadrons and the like. At the same time they could check privately owned boats in the area and make sure that existing regulations under the Canada Shipping Act were enforced. I think this is very important.

We have had this year a great deal of trouble finding employment for our students during the summer months. They need the money. Under such a program they would be performing a very useful function. I hope the government will consider this proposal. When the bill goes to the transport committee, as it will very shortly, I hope the government, if it does not move amendments itself, will accept amendments in this regard.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to follow up some of the problems posed by my colleague the