

*The Address—Mr. Pearkes*

unable to reach a Canadian vessel in distress in Canadian waters. Although the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier) has informed the house that it is too expensive for Canada to establish a coastguard service, I do suggest that initial steps be taken to the end that better co-ordinating rooms may be provided.

The majority of accidents occur at those nodal points where sea lanes converge, particularly at the entrances to our harbours. The modern method of directing navigation inside a harbour is by the use of radar. At the commencement of the last war Canada led all nations in the development of radar and radar equipment. I am afraid, however, that today we are lagging behind. While there is a world-wide system of radar control in harbours, I believe I am correct in saying that the only radar at present established in Canada for the control of shipping within our harbours is a set at Halifax, and it is too far out to be of practical use in the control of shipping within that harbour. Had sets been placed close to the ferry between Dartmouth and Halifax, I question whether the accidents would have occurred which took place a month ago, when naval vessels collided with the ferry. As an example of what is being done elsewhere I would refer to the Mersey ferry. In thick weather that ferry is radar-controlled and is thus able to maintain its schedule.

Shortly before Christmas an experimental set was placed at the Lion's gate bridge, Vancouver. I hope these experiments will be followed up, and that we may soon see the establishment of an operational set. I do not believe, however, that the placing of a set at the outside of a harbour is all that is required. Sets should be placed right by the ferry slips so that the ferries between Vancouver and North Vancouver may run on schedule, whether in thick weather or not. One radar set established by the ferry slips would do the work of six placed on the ferries themselves.

Canadian Arsenals Limited, in co-operation with the national research council, have done a good deal of research work in connection with radar. Their new Mariner sets, No. 268, are in my opinion efficient. Many of them, however, are being sold to countries outside Canada. Surely our first duty would be to set up similar sets in every Canadian harbour—on the Atlantic and the Pacific, and on the great lakes—to ensure the safety of shipping entering our harbours.

I would urge that investigations be made looking to the establishment of radar sets at the points I have indicated. I do not care whether they are produced by Canadian Arsenals Limited, by Marconi, by Cossor

(Canada) Limited, or by some other organization; that is not important. Radar is the modern means of directing vessels to harbours in thick weather.

In connection with the radar sets established on our own Canadian merchant vessels, I have seen vessels entering our west coast ports the operators on which have complained about their sets being out of order. They have spoken of the great difficulty of having the radar sets serviced. May I offer the suggestion that this is an opportunity for vocational training courses which could be given veterans of the merchant marine, so that we might have sufficient trained personnel in all our ports to service the radar equipment of our Canadian merchantmen upon their return from long voyages.

Radar equipment is not expensive. The sets produced by Canadian Arsenals Limited are comparatively light in weight—about two hundred pounds. These would be suitable for use in vessels.

I should like to touch upon one other point. I refer to the international convention on the safety of life at sea, to which a Canadian delegation was sent last year. While I have not yet had an opportunity to read the report—and I hope it will be tabled in due course—press reports have appeared setting out some of its recommendations. These reports have emphasized the importance of having all passenger-carrying vessels equipped with radio communication, and of the watch at such radio equipment being continuous, not only in order that early notice may be given of any disaster to the vessel itself, but also in order that disaster befalling other vessels which may have sent out SOS signals may be reported.

The Canada Shipping Act presents certain limitations. In it we find drawn a distinction between vessels plying on an international route and those on a purely domestic or coastwise service. So far as I know, no such distinction is drawn in the United Kingdom regulations. I submit there is very little difference in this respect between a vessel sailing from Vancouver to Victoria and one which sails from Vancouver to Seattle, or one leaving Vancouver for Prince Rupert and another from Vancouver to Ketchikan, Alaska.

I would ask that as soon as possible a review be made of the Canada Shipping Act to see that it complies with the recommendations of the international convention to which I have referred. I regret to see no mention in the speech from the throne of any proposed amendments to the Canada Shipping Act.

The last matter to which I wish to direct the attention of the house is the need for