

Merchant Marine

will not create an immediate market for shipbuilding in Canada, they would certainly help to establish a merchant marine much faster now than later on when we would have to construct ships starting from scratch.

I suggest that the Canadian government should move into some new programs, perhaps a mortgage insurance program to guarantee payment for ships. This procedure has been successfully followed in the United States. I understand that in the United States this program is in the black; in other words, it has made a profit. It is not a program which will necessitate subsidization by the Canadian government; it would in fact pay its own way and would be a great advantage to the people who would wish to involve themselves in the merchant marine service.

Statistics which reveal that Canada's requirement for certified ship personnel has increased by 12 per cent since 1970 and the requirement for officers 27 per cent in the same period concern me. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the facilities in Canada to train these people. I hope the hon. member who spoke before me will check his figures. I believe he used the figure of 17,000 seagoing personnel in Canada, but I understand the correct figure is approximately 29,000 people. At the present time there is a shortage of training facilities, with the result that we are unable to train people to fill positions, and this has had the effect in the last several years of increasing the number of marine accidents in Canada.

For three and a half years I have petitioned the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) to set up on the west coast a coast guard training facility—or call it what you want. We will be setting up a volunteer coast guard operation on the west coast of Canada, but we do not have a training facility. Nor do we have a training facility to give fishermen navigation and similar courses to upgrade their skills. Instead of spending millions of dollars on search and rescue facilities to find people in trouble off the coast, whether they are private boaters or commercial fishermen, what we should be doing is using a small percentage of that money for training facilities so that we have people with navigational skills to sail the west coast waters of Canada, which are no doubt dangerous.

In 1978 a council was set up to look into the situation. We are not going to rectify or solve the problem by setting up an advisory board, and in this respect I hope I have some agreement from members on the opposite side from British Columbia. Rather we should be setting up an institution on the west coast to provide training facilities for native fishermen, commercial fishermen and private boaters, and also for our merchant marine. I hope members from the west will support me when I say to the Minister of Transport: "Do not set up any more commissions or advisory boards to tell us what we need. We know what we need on the west coast; give us the money to build institutions and to hire people to provide training for those who risk their lives in the waters off the west coast of Canada."

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Would the hon. member allow a question?

[Mr. Anderson.]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): The hon. member for Capilano is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, when I have finished my remarks I will welcome a question from the hon. member.

In this day and age there should not be this serious need for qualified personnel in the marine sector. On the west coast of British Columbia, with the salmon enhancement program, a new era will commence as far as our commercial fishermen are concerned. Therefore, would it not be more appropriate, instead of increased surveillance by teams of destroyers, aircraft, helicopters, which are all very expensive, to funnel a small portion of those costs into the education of people using the waters off the west coast of Canada? We presently face a problem of calamitous proportions in British Columbia in using hovercraft and various other services to help people whose pleasure boats get into difficulties on weekends. This costs a vast amount of money.

I suggest that the establishment of a single facility which could be used by the merchant service, by the volunteer coast guard, by the permanent coast guard, by people in our armed forces, by pleasure boaters and by commercial fishermen is a top priority for the west coast of Canada. Certainly priority is not in the field of a study of what is required in order to train personnel for the merchant marine on the west coast.

I understand there is a coast guard training facility on the east coast of Canada. However, I suggest that the differences between the east and west coasts are great enough to justify two separate facilities.

An advisory council, for all its good intentions, is not what is required at this time. There are 29,000 seagoing people in the merchant marine and other forms of marine activity. The annual revenue is \$750 billion, so we are not talking about a penny-ante group or a small portion of Canadian workers. For that reason I support the arguments brought forward by my colleague the hon. member for Lévis (Mr. Guay).

Since we are technologically developed and have a good transportation service in the country inland, it is hoped that the same policies can be applied to making the marine industry strong and viable.

● (1812)

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Anderson), who said he would allow me a question at the end of his remarks. The hon. member spoke rather extensively about the need for training programs, particularly on the west coast and for native people there. Can he in the few minutes left explain why the government failed to support the training program that the Indian Brotherhood had in place at Alert Bay? They had there a seaman's and fisherman's training program that failed to maintain the support of the government. Why did the government let that fail when it was very badly needed in that particular area of British Columbia?