

private broadcasting, communication with air-planes, point to point radio communication, shore to ship radio communication, and radio direction finding, comes under the Radiotelegraph Act. It is the duty of this department, under this vote, to carry out the regulations and provide all inspection facilities and the technical services required to administer that act.

Mr. LAWSON: Then this item does not deal with the inspection of individual radios?

Mr. HOWE: Not at all, no.

Mr. LAWSON: Would the minister be good enough to give the reasons for the increase in this item? Is it merely statutory increases?

Mr. HOWE: Restoration of statutory deduction, \$3,413; statutory increases, \$1,170; sundry promotions, \$930.

Mr. McLEAN (Simcoe): I intended to ask the minister a question under an item further down, but his remarks prompt me to ask it under this item. Is it the intention to broaden the regulations and requirements applying to freight ships plying on the great lakes? At present I believe the shipping act requires that ships of 5,000 tons gross or more have wireless sets and an operator on board, and even those ships may be exempted under certain conditions.

Mr. HOWE: If my hon. friend will allow this item to pass, the item he wishes to discuss is No. 394, direction-finding stations.

Item agreed to.

Radio direction finding stations, radio beacons and radiotelegraph stations, operation and maintenance, \$634,324.75.

Mr. McLEAN (Simcoe): May we expect that these regulations will be extended? Certain happenings in recent years indicate the necessity of having them extended and stiffened. Hon. members will recall that a year ago last fall a ship, the Sand Merchant, was lost on lake Erie with all on board, a crew of nineteen, under circumstances which would indicate that if there had been proper ship to shore communication those lives probably would not have been lost. Again, during the past season the Calgadoc, a ship which ordinarily plied on the great lakes, was lost with all on board somewhere in the vicinity of Newfoundland. There was no ship to shore communication and nothing was known as to what happened to the ship. Particularly in Ontario a large number of men are occupied in manning freight ships that ply

[Mr. Howe.]

on the great lakes. Under the best of circumstances their occupation is extremely hazardous. They are in a less favourable position than many other labouring men in that during their working season they are scattered on boats all over the great lakes, and after the season is over they are scattered all over the province in small groups. They have no strong organization, and so many of them are out of work and so keen to get jobs on the ships that it is difficult for them to speak for themselves with any degree of force in connection with regulations relating to safety. Under those circumstances I think the time has come when the regulations under which freight ships operate ought to be revised.

I have information from some officials of the department that experiments are being carried out in connection with telephone communication from ship to shore and that it is intended to have a conference with authorities from the United States with a view to having uniform regulations applying to Canadian and United States ships on the great lakes. I know a large number of seamen and their families in Ontario would like an assurance from the minister that the department will take up at an early date the revision of the regulations affecting the conditions under which the seamen of Ontario operate, especially on freight boats on the great lakes, in order that when these ships get into trouble, as they often do during the bad weather, these workmen may have some chance to preserve their lives.

Mr. HOWE: We are giving constant study to that problem. A year ago last autumn we put into force for the first time a provision for compulsory wireless operators on freighters of 5,000 tons and over. Since then we have been trying to solve the problem of the smaller ships, and I think we have arrived at a satisfactory solution. We have established radiotelephone receiving equipment at our principal ship to shore stations along the great lakes, and have made arrangements whereby a telephone instrument can be installed on the ship by which connection can be made to the nearest ship to shore station, and then with automatic connection over the Bell telephone system to any point we wish. A great many companies have installed these sets voluntarily. The cost is about \$500 per season. This overcomes the great difficulty of requiring wireless operators on ships, which meant considerable cost. The expense of a wireless installation and an operator was a considerable item for a freighter carrying a small operating crew. One difficulty we have