operates will be ratified by the governments of all the Contracting Parties, thus bringing the conservation of this resource within the responsibility of the Commission.

ALLAYING PUBLIC MISGIVINGS

I might say that the widespread public interest in the welfare of the seal herds displays a sense of alertness and concern that speaks well for the individuals and groups concerned. However, I should like to allay their misgivings that the seal herds may be exterminated. This operation, like others of a commercial nature, can only continue as long as the returns from it warrant. The outfitting of ships and the chartering of aircraft are extremely expensive and if there is a reduction in the seal herds to the point where it is no longer profitable to hunt them it will inevitably follow that these operations will cease. Thus, the resource would not find itself in danger of being depleted completely. These seals have, in fact, been more scarce at some periods than in recent years.

Misgiving has also been expressed in various quarters about the method of killing seals, particularly the young. It is the opinion of our experts that the method presently used is effective when properly executed and the animals are not subjected to undue pain or indignity. I would not say that there are not some abuses and such happenings may be attributed, partly at least, though not excusably, to the conditions under which the sealers work. I would suggest, however, that in this industry, as in others where the slaughter of animals is involved, there is always bound to be public concern. Killing of animals is at best not for the sensitive and most of us would probably not enjoy our steaks or chops immediately after visiting a slaughter house.

The idea of killing the young is, of course, distasteful to all of us. It is nevertheless true that it does more harm to the seal stock to kill a young mature animal than a pup. Because of death from natural causes, it would take several pups to result in one mature female. Since, on the average, over the years the pups have been more valuable on the market, it has been beneficial both to the industry and to the maintenance of the resource to harvest pups rather than adults.

As I have stated in the House of Commons on Thursday, March 26, the whole matter of sealing operations on the Atlantic Coast is under serious consideration and it is expected that before the opening of the 1965 sealing season more restrictive regulations will be in effect which I hope will take care of the situation.

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AUTOMATIC CRASH INDICATOR

In a strong bid to improve flight safety and reduce costly air searches, the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources has announced that all aircraft chartered by its Northern Administration Branch will in future be required to carry automatic crash-position indicators, in addition to the other emergency and survival equipment carried by chartered aircraft.

Northern Affairs employees each year log hundreds of thousands of miles of northern flying in the course of their normal duties. Most of this is over some of the most sparsely-settled land on earth, where downed aircraft may be lost for long periods. The automatic crash-position indicator provides the means for such planes to send out automatic signals by which can be found with relative promptness.

The automatic crash-position indicator might be described as an automatic distress radio beacon, used for locating aircraft that have crashed in unknown areas. It was designed by the National Research Council after many years of research work, to make air search and rescue work more effective. Government contract charters provide, in effect, for payment for the equipment over three years.

OPERATION

With the automatic crash-position indicator, air searches can be undertaken day or night under most weather conditions. Although the beacon is normally released automatically, it can be deployed manually in special circumstances if required. When released, it begins to transmit a distress signal as it flies away, curving sharply to slow down for a gently landing at a safe distance from the aircraft. The frequency of the signal, 243 MC, is the standard search-and-rescue frequency.

A continuous signal can be transmitted by the beacon for about four days. At a search height of about 9,000 feet, the signal can be picked up over a radius of 20 to 40 miles. On the rare occasions when it is desired to shut off the beacon after deployment, an emergency shut-off is possible. The system has been designed for permanent mounting on aircraft.

A number of portable beacons have been purchased by the Department for use on aircraft which have not had crash-indicator systems installed.

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MINISTER VISITS LAKEHEAD

Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Minister of Trade and Commerce, visited the Lakehead cities of Port Arthur and Fort William on April 9 to study at first hand the 1964 programme for grain handling at the Twin City ports.

Mr. Sharp's visit came early in the new navigation season on the Great Lakes – a season that may see a record volume of grain moved through the Lakehead. During the latter half of the 1963 season, from August 1 to the close of navigation, 227 million bushels of grain were handled at the two ports, the highest post-war total for the fall shipping period.

Mr. Sharp met members of the Lakehead Harbour Commission, representatives of the elevator companies, pools and the grain trade, local federal Members of Parliament and officials of the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners. This group was joined for lunch by the mayors of Port Arthur and Fort William and representatives of the Dominion Marine Association and the two railways. During the afternoon, Mr. Sharp toured Lakehead port facilities and met with local union leaders.