

Adjournment Debate

way. This is not the first time that this matter has been raised.

In Newfoundland today there is indignation, and rightly so. We are a sea-going province, and a sea-going people. We do not take lightly these accidents at sea. We feel that if adequate search and rescue facilities were available, we could prevent in many instances tragic loss of life.

Today I asked for unanimous consent, under Standing Order 43, to propose a motion calling on the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) to order a judicial inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the foundering of the fishing boat *San Juan* and the activities of the Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Bartlett* in relation thereto. After that unsuccessful attempt to raise the matter by way of Standing Order 43, a telegram was sent to the federal Minister of Transport by the minister of justice and the attorney general of Newfoundland asking for a judicial inquiry into this latest mishap, and asking for the terms of reference of the inquiry to include the other two mishaps which resulted in loss of life earlier this year. The inquiry was to go back to the first of this year.

A judicial inquiry was ordered in response to the foundering of the Canadian National Railways steamship *Patrick Morris*, which was involved in the search for the motor vessel *Enterprise*, which had sunk in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or the Cabot Strait. I should like, in my limited time, to put on record some of the recommendations emanating from the 1971 judicial inquiry. The accident took place in 1970.

In his report, Judge Soper of the district court said:

The area served by the search and rescue forces appears to be large when considered from the point of view of distance from Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

The report went on to say:

It is therefore recommended that the hon. Minister of Transport through his appropriate colleagues in the Government of Canada

- (a) seek a better dispersal of search and rescue aircraft and personnel on the Atlantic coast, with no diminution of services that will be available, so that aircraft may reach distress areas more quickly;
- (b) cause a detailed review to be made of the procedures followed so that in future search and rescue aircraft will be ordered into action earlier than they were when the *Enterprise* was reported lost; and
- (c) request an increase in the number of personnel that will be available in shifts at search and rescue stations so that the reaction time may be reduced to a minimum on a twenty-four hours a day basis.

These recommendations were submitted to the Minister of Transport.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, may I just finish my remarks briefly—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order please. The hon. member's time has expired.

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I wish to set the record straight about the efforts of the search and rescue people in this latest incident involving, as the hon. member says, a tragic loss of lives.

[Mr. McGrath.]

Earlier this week, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Richardson) undertook to examine the facts presented to him by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) in connection with the search for the vessel *San Juan*. As a result of this undertaking I have a report taken from the log entry of the rescue co-ordinating centre at Halifax which outlines the events as they happened during the period in which the *San Juan* was in distress.

The rescue co-ordinating centre received a call from the RCMP at 7.20 p.m. on February 22 to say that the *San Juan* was in difficulty. Twenty-one minutes later, at 7.41 p.m., the RCC issued an all-ships alert, and four minutes after that the Canadian coastguard ship *Bartlett* was tasked for the search and rescue mission.

The weather at that time precluded an air search. The *Bartlett* located the *San Juan* at 0400 hours on February 23 and passed a message to the rescue centres that the vessel was in no immediate danger, that sea conditions were unfavourable to passing a tow line, and that the *Bartlett* would stand by awaiting daylight. Shortly after that message was sent, at about 5 a.m., the *Bartlett* lost radio contact with the *San Juan*, the vessel's lights went out and it disappeared. At daybreak the *Bartlett* was joined by the motor vessels *Sea Transport* and *Arctic Explorer* in a search for the *San Juan*.

A Tracker aircraft was tasked to assist but it could not get airborne because of the weather. The weather moderated during the afternoon and the Tracker joined the search and rescue at about 4 p.m. About 6.30 p.m. the *MV Sea Transport* sighted some wreckage and the *Bartlett* proceeded to investigate. Shortly after, the *Arctic Explorer* sighted and recovered some debris believed to be from the *San Juan*. The ships and the aircraft continued to search throughout the night and around ten o'clock the next morning, February 24, the Tracker aircraft found the *San Juan* partly submerged with no sign of survivors.

From this account it would appear that the rescue co-ordinating centre followed proper procedures in its attempt to rescue the *San Juan*. The weather delayed the initiation of the air search, but three vessels were actively searching the area. I would remind the hon. member that during the night and early morning of February 22-23 the rescue vessels were contending with waves up to 40 feet which made the rescue a near impossible task.

I wish to say to the hon. member for St. John's East that my minister did not, and would not, mislead the House—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): I regret to interrupt the parliamentary secretary but his time has expired.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION—LIAISON WITH
MANPOWER IN REPORTING JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN
COMPANIES FUNDED BY DEPARTMENT

Mr. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, it is a condition precedent in the Regional Development Incentives Act that all companies which are to receive an incentive grant must report all the openings to Canada Manpower before receiving any money. Section 13(1) of the act states:

It is a condition precedent to the payment of any amount on account of development incentive that the applicant keep the Department of