

agreement will include 24 countries of NATO and former Warsaw Pact countries.

The successful conclusion of the agreement is of significance and importance to Canada, since it was Canada that joined Hungary in seizing the initiative in 1989 and subsequently hosted Open Skies conferences in Ottawa and Budapest in 1990. During the difficult negotiation period since 1990, it was Canada that kept the proposal and initiatives alive and on track. It should be noted that Canada will host and chair the first session of the Open Skies Consultative Commission in Vienna starting in April and continuing to the end of June.

The treaty is, first and foremost, a confidence-building measure under which all states will engage in collaborative and intrusive exercises within the territories of the other states. It will provide some possibility for aerial verification of arms control agreements within the region, and for the sharing of technology of sensors and related equipment. The treaty is of particular importance to smaller or middle-sized countries that do not have access to satellite or other remote sensing possibilities. It will give them a concrete incentive to mount cooperative programs to realize the full benefits of the treaty.

Over these last three years, the Open Skies negotiations have been a matter of continuing interest to the Subcommittee on Verification and Technology of the North Atlantic Assembly, which I have had the honour to chair.

I am certain honourable senators would wish to join me in commending Ambassador David Peel and members of the Open Skies negotiating team from External Affairs on their achievement and the successful conclusion of this initiative.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

RECOGNITION OF ROLE OF MERCHANT SEAMEN

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: Honourable senators, I wish to make a statement concerning merchant seaman and the merchant navy. I understood that the minister was to appear before a Committee of the Whole or before the Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs to answer questions on when he intends to take some actions on behalf of these veterans. As yet, I have not heard that the minister is either coming before a committee of the Senate or intends to do anything about this matter.

The time has come for us as members of the Senate to support the Sub-committee on Veterans Affairs, Senator Jack Marshall and the honourable George Proud in the other place in working on behalf of these navy veterans who were out in the North Atlantic during the war in slow ships with no guns to protect themselves. They were completely dependent upon the Navy. On many occasions they were left on their own, and many of their number were lost at sea.

When World War II began in September 1939, Canada's merchant marine consisted of only 37 ships and 1,400 merchant seaman. When the war ended in 1945, their number had grown to 180 ships and 12,000 mariners. Sixty-seven Canadian ships were lost during the war, and of the 7,705 seamen

credited by the Department of Transport with sailing in dangerous waters, 1,146 were killed and 198 were taken prisoner. Many of these were taken prisoner in Germany and Japan and were held for months, and even years, in the terrible conditions of the prison camps.

It is time that the government took action. I demand that the minister appear either before a Senate Committee of the Whole or the Sub-committee on Veterans Affairs and tell us whether or not he intends to give this matter some consideration or why he does not intend to support the cause of these merchant seamen.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

CBC MINI-SERIES "THE VALOUR AND THE HORROR"

Hon. Jack Marshall: Honourable senators, last week I stated my intention to make reference to letters and extracts to support my motion that we examine the series of films, "The Valour and The Horror". Today I will read a letter from the son of the commander of the Canadian Army, General H.D.G. Crerar, indicating his dismay at the reference to General Crerar as a blunderer who sent men to their instant death. Nothing could be further from the truth. He also sent me a copy of a letter that General Dwight Eisenhower wrote to Mrs. Crerar in 1965 on the death of her husband, General Crerar.

I quote:

Thursday I learned the shocking news of the death of your distinguished husband. Because, during the war days, he was a close and valued associate I thought it fitting to issue a public statement immediately. However, I should like to write to you a more personal note because of the respect, admiration and affection that I felt toward your late husband.

• (1410)

General Crerar was notable not only because of his great professional skill and qualities of leadership but because of his personal character, including his selflessness. He was not one to seek the limelight for command headlines; he was one of those great souls whose only ambition was to do his duty to his troops and to his country.

While my contacts with him were sporadic and infrequent since the war, I still would like you to know that not only I but thousands of Americans share the burden of grief that you must now feel.

I hope that many Canadians out there—and I am sure there are many—would want us to examine this film, which is a defamation to our Canadian forces.

[Translation]

THE ESTIMATES, 1991-92

REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE ON MAIN ESTIMATES PRESENTED AND PRINTED AS APPENDIX

Hon. Fernand-E. Leblanc: Honourable senators, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance has the honour to present its seventh report concerning its review of the expendi-