

*Merchant Seamen*

dents of those who lost their lives. If help is not to be given in that way, it could be done by amending the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act.

The main decision to be made is whether or not we are to treat these men as part of the forces. This suggestion has been made by the legion right across Canada. Just last month the British Columbia command passed unanimously a resolution asking that the same treatment be given the merchant navy as if its members had been members of the armed forces, including vocational training grants, university education grants and other rehabilitation benefits. It is not only a question of compensation; it goes farther than that. For example, they cannot get vocational training unless they take that training for service in the merchant marine.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I do not want to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but this is a bill concerning compensation for merchant seamen in the nature of workmen's compensation. My hon. friend is now dealing with all the benefits to which merchant seamen are entitled.

Mr. GREEN: Are not entitled.

Mr. CHEVRIER: He is dealing with war benefits. I do not see how he can discuss vocational training under this bill. The act was discussed at some length last year, and this bill has to do with one subject only, workmen's compensation for merchant seamen. I will not attempt to interrupt the hon. member if he deals with that, but if he is going to cover the whole field of benefits to merchant seamen, then I submit that that is something which could be discussed on the estimates of the director of merchant seamen.

Mr. GREEN: I submit that I have a right to discuss the various types of compensation which could be paid to merchant seamen and their dependents. I do not think the minister can say, "You must go this far and no farther." He cannot say, for example, that I cannot go back and deal with compensation before August 1, 1945.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I will not attempt to interrupt you as long as you deal with compensation for merchant seamen because you are within your rights, but if you go beyond that and deal with other benefits, then I do not think you are in order.

Mr. GREEN: I submit that I should be allowed to deal with the different types of benefits which should be given to merchant seamen.

Mr. CHEVRIER: You will have every opportunity to do that on the vote concerning the director of merchant seamen.

[Mr. Green.]

Mr. GREEN: That may be brought up during the last days of the session.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I assure you it will not.

Mr. GREEN: The minister cannot be sure himself. I do not think this is a case where the minister should draw the line too tightly.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would draw the attention of hon. members to the second paragraph of the explanatory note which reads:

The sole purpose of the bill is to preserve rights to compensation acquired under the regulations before the act came into force and to continue under the act all proceedings taken under the regulations.

I think the discussion should come within the terms of that paragraph.

Mr. GREEN: I would think that really covers the whole field, but I will not press that point. Finally, I would point out to the minister that these men were given gunnery practice; they were assigned to guns on ships and were really treated as men in the forces.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): They were not paid like that.

Mr. GREEN: The Secretary of State had better keep out of this if he does not want to have his fingers burned. I might mention that they did not get any gratuities. We have had the argument thrown up before by members of the government that these men got good pay and therefore they should not get any further consideration. That is entirely too hard-boiled an attitude to take, and besides it is not correct.

Mr. CHEVRIER: I do not think the government has taken that attitude.

Mr. GREEN: The Secretary of State—

Mr. CHEVRIER: He has not suggested that.

Mr. GREEN: —is trying to show that they got a lot of money.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): I did not say that at all.

Mr. GREEN: That is what you meant. If the Secretary of State wants to go into that question, I have the facts on that also. I think he will be surprised to find out how little these men did get. They are the forgotten men of Canada of the last war, and it is time this parliament took action to see that that condition is changed.