

OFFICIAL RESPONSES

ANNEX E

28. Canada did set up wartime training facilities for merchant seamen--after it was too late for every captured seaman. Free tuition was offered in some circumstances. Trainees were eligible for War Service Bonus on earnings from date of entry, and were given qualification credits toward Veteran's [life] Insurance under P.C. 3227. Wireless officers could train for a maximum of 12 months and receive \$60 per month subsistence, and a refund of tuition on graduation. All that was academic to merchant seamen who were at sea or already POWs before the scheme came into effect under Order in Council P.C. 14/3550 of 19 May 1941. There were no refunds, bonuses or compensation for those who had funded their own training. They served at a critical time in the war at sea, and thought they were in the right place at the right time doing the right thing.

29. Merchant Seamen were resourceful, resilient, independent, and patient. It helped them make the Merchant Navy camp in Germany, Milag Nord, one of the camps in Europe with the highest morale. They needed the same qualities in abundance when they returned home in 1945 to find themselves officially unwelcome afloat or ashore.

30. Nineteen years later, Bill C64, 15 Feb. 1962, amended the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act and extended the provisions of the War Veteran's Allowances Act to Merchant Seamen (among others). Then after thirty-one years, 1 April 1976, the Compensation for Former Prisoners of War Act included compensation for Merchant Seamen prisoners. For some it was too late, and the scars remained; for many it abated the stigma of rejection.

31. In 1982, Veteran's legislation was *interpreted* by the War Veterans Allowance Board so that veterans who crossed the ferry between the mainland and Prince Edward Island became eligible for Veteran's Allowance for "duties performed beyond the territorial