

Q. I know for a time the provision was that they could not get it if they were over 30 years of age. That ruled out a great many of the men. Has it been changed?—A. I see under P.C. 6227 of December 13, 1949, the time limit for applications was extended to September 30, 1950, and discretionary powers were given jointly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and to the Minister of Transport to approve training for seamen over 30 years of age.

Q. How many over 30 years of age got the training?—A. I have not got that.

The CHAIRMAN: We will get that from the Department of Labour when Mr. Crawford is called.

*By Mr. Green:*

Q. Only those who had signed the manning pool agreement were entitled to this training?—A. That is right.

Q. And if a man had been in the merchant navy before the manning pool was set up which, as Mr. Heide said, was the most dangerous time, he could not qualify. Is that right?—A. Yes, that is right.

Mr. QUELCH: What was the date when it was set up?

Mr. GREEN: 1944?

Mr. CROLL: When was the pool set up?

Mr. CRAWFORD: 1943.

The WITNESS: The bonus was granted to those who signed under the manning pool on or after April 1st, 1944.

Mr. QUELCH: Was there any agreement prior to that date?

The WITNESS: The special war service bonus was extended to seamen who had served prior to April 1st, 1944. So the men having service prior to then did qualify for the bonus, and if so, they were entitled to these benefits.

*By Mr. Green:*

Q. Would your department be in a position now to carry on with a plan of this type if we should recommend that such a plan be continued?—A. I presume that the machinery could be set up with the co-operation of the Department of Labour, as has been done in the past.

Q. Would there be any serious obstacle to getting a vocational training plan underway again?—A. Not so far as I know, if it were policy to do it.

Q. You rather suggested that this committee had been responsible for the merchant navy men not getting more benefits. You said you were restricted by what this committee did. I think that is entirely wrong. This committee has always been very favourably disposed. Could you tell me of any restriction this committee has placed upon these men?—A. Our policy has always been guided and controlled by the findings of the committee of veterans affairs.

Q. Well, if our wishes had always been followed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, these men would have got much more help. In any event, this committee was never responsible for the cutting down.

The WITNESS: Then I stand corrected, sir.

Mr. GILLIS: You see, this committee cannot make government policy.

Mr. QUELCH: We can only recommend. That is all.

The WITNESS: The policy may be made by the government.

Mr. DINSDALE: I think the witness said that all merchant seamen retroactively became eligible for the bonus. Is that so regardless of whether they signed the pool agreement or not?