

until August 1, 1945. I suggest that there should be put on our statute books without further delay some legislation which would cover those men injured in the merchant navy during the time I have mentioned, and which would also cover the dependents of those who lost their lives.

It might be that such coverage could not be given by an amendment to this act. There is, of course, another act known as the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act, in which provision is made for the payment of pensions to merchant seamen, if the injury or disease was the direct result of enemy action, or counter-action taken against an enemy. However, very few cases come under that act, because the merchant seaman has to show that his injury or disease was the direct result of enemy action. In other words, he must almost be hit by a torpedo in order to qualify for the pension.

Mr. MITCHELL: If he were hit by a torpedo he would not be here.

Mr. GREEN: If a torpedo hit a tough man like the Minister of Labour I am sure it would not hurt him much.

Mr. MacINNIS: Too bad for the torpedo.

Mr. GREEN: I do not think it would be possible for a man to qualify under this Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act in respect of disease. I do not know how a disease could be traced directly to enemy action. However, proof that the act does not extend very far is found in the fact that only thirty-one seamen and dependents have been able to qualify for pension. On the other hand, I believe that of about 18,000 merchant seamen who served during the war, 1,091 lost their lives. In addition, many were sick and many others were injured. So that the percentage covered by the Civilian War Pensions and Allowances Act is very small indeed.

I point out to the minister that there are cases of this type which should be covered. For example, a ship is in port, and is blacked out. Let us say she is in the port of Liverpool. A seaman falls and is injured, or perhaps is killed, as a result of stumbling in the dark. I believe that if that happened before August 1, 1945, the only kind of compensation he or his dependents could get would be through claiming against the shipping company. I may be wrong in that, but that is my information.

Again, the same thing might happen while a ship is at sea. She is blacked out; a seaman falls—perhaps over lumber in the cargo.

Mr. CHEVRIER: He cannot claim under this act.

Mr. GREEN: He gets absolutely no compensation. He could have claimed under the act if it had happened after August 1, 1945.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Yes.

Mr. GREEN: My point is that there is no help for those men between 1939 and August 1, 1945.

Then, referring again to sickness, I know of a case in Vancouver respecting a young lad who at an early age joined the merchant navy and caught a tropical disease. His health has been ruined, but he can get absolutely no help. There are many cases of that type which should be covered by some kind of legislation.

I know the objection has been raised that there would be no report made as to how the injury happened or how the disease arose, but I would point out that all ships have log books in which the facts would be carefully entered and, furthermore, there are port doctors at every port and records would be available from those sources.

Something must be done and done as soon as possible to help these merchant seamen. They are far too restricted, and I am afraid the difficulty is that they fall between two departments, the Department of Transport and the Department of Veterans Affairs. It seems to me that we would get around this difficulty if we decided to treat them as members of the fighting forces. The general public has always considered that the men of the merchant navy were in the fighting forces, and His Majesty the King made a statement early in the war that the merchant navy was really the fourth arm of the services. During a portion of the war they had I think, more casualties than any other branch of the service. Canada has not treated her merchant seamen in the way they should have been treated.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Canada has treated her merchant seamen as well as the United Kingdom and the United States have.

Mr. GREEN: The United Kingdom has never given sympathetic treatment to her merchant seamen. I do not know about the United States and I do not really care. In my opinion, Canada has treated her merchant seamen shamefully and it is time something was done to remedy the situation. I do not see why the act should not be opened up to allow men who were permanently injured while in the merchant navy to get compensation and to provide some assistance for the depen-