

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Could we not hear the witness' statement without interruption, and then ask questions afterwards?

The CHAIRMAN: He asked for permission to answer the question that was asked. Mr. MacDougall. Let us proceed.

The WITNESS: All seamen entitled to such bonus were also entitled to: (1) the rights, benefits and privileges of the Veterans Insurance Act; (2) vocational training of a restricted nature to increase their skill and knowledge for advancement in the merchant navy; (3) all the provisions of the post-discharge re-establishment order respecting vocational and technical training benefits, under P.C. 5210 of July 13, 1944. The deadline for the bonus and benefits was advanced several times, finally to coincide with the expiration of the War Measures Act to March, 1947.

Then there was coverage for merchant seamen under the Unemployment Insurance Act. On October 1, 1946, merchant seamen were given this coverage. Seamen who had been in receipt of the war service bonus or special bonus were given credit for wartime service without payment of contributions.

On January 1, 1949, vocational training was brought in. By this order the scope of vocational training aforementioned was enlarged and made similar to that granted veterans through the Department of Labour. It was confined to men eligible for bonus and under 30 years of age. You have had the statistics as to the number already tabled. The closing date for that was the 29th June, 1949. On December 13, 1949, the time limit for the applications was extended to September 30, 1950. Discretionary powers were given jointly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the Minister of Transport to approve training for merchant seamen over 30 years of age who were unemployed. This training did not include university training or pre-university training.

That is the outline of what was done. Now, I heard Mr. Heide this morning mention the question of wages. I just looked that up. In 1942 the basic wage for able seamen was \$56.20 per month, but there was on top of that a war risk bonus of \$44.50, paid by the ship owners. I may say, Mr. Chairman, also that this latest proposal to extend the vocational training benefits so as to make them available to the seamen who are now being displaced by the transfer of registry of Canadian ships has already been considered on the highest level and it has been turned down, although it was, I may say, considered on the basis of everybody who is now being displaced.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

Mr. JAMES: By "everybody", whom do you mean?

The WITNESS: The seamen who have been displaced, irrespective of whether they served during the war.

*By Mr. Green:*

Q. What is your department doing now for the merchant seamen who had war service?—A. It is just for those who are residual, those who are left still having training, Mr. Green.

Q. We had evidence this morning from General Burns that there were two still in training. Are there only those two whom you are concerned with?—A. I think so. It is just the residual number who have not completed the training which they were granted.

Q. I think you said in your statement that nobody could get this training unless under 30 years of age, is that right?—A. There was an amendment to that which extended it to those over 30 years of age. Perhaps Mr. Crawford could tell us that. The Department of Labour administers this training. We merely process the men and say whether they are eligible or not.