

OFFICIAL RESPONSES

ANNEX E

21. Radio Officers, who had been the prime targets of the raider attacks, were among the first casualties of the peace. There was an immediate surplus because the wartime requirement for two Radio Officers per ship (operating twenty-four hours per day), was reduced to one. Over 50% unemployment came immediately. Over 200 Radio Officers became surplus and they were not offered rehabilitation, training, or employment. That included a class of prisoners in which most had paid their own way on several months of training to qualify. They found themselves repatriated, beached and stranded.

22. The Director of Merchant Seamen's statistics indicate that in the Battle of the Atlantic approximately 40% of Canadian seamen casualties were serving in Allied ships of non-Canadian registry. Over one-third of Canadian Nationals who were MNPOWs served on Allied ships not of Canadian Registry. They did not have employers to return to.

23. *Officially unwanted ashore, declared ineligible for higher education or Veteran's preference, and rejected for reemployment at sea, they ranked below existing employees and returned veterans. Many were denied a share of the post-war prosperity, and many potential careers were blighted.* It was not enough to have been victims of the Battle of the Atlantic; Canada proceeded to make them casualties of the peace. In the sanitized words of one POW, "If war comes again, I will not go to sea. I will join the military or go to jail first."

On the Special Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Mr. L. A. Mutch, Chairman, stated on page 1592 of the proceedings: "In fact the man who has not got a discharge certificate for service overseas practically finds himself in the position that he has not got a licence to work."