

patriotic duty just as though they had joined some other branch of the service. Today, when these young men wish to attend university they do not get the \$60 which is received by men who served in the other branches. Some of these young men were on ships which were torpedoed; they crossed the Atlantic during those very dark days. Today they sit beside young men in universities who were never outside Canada. These young men receive \$60 a month, but the men of the merchant marine who wish to complete their education receive absolutely nothing. I contend, Mr. Chairman, that that is most unfair treatment.

Again, the minister last night spoke about the ten per cent bonus. I think he knows that not all the men in the merchant marine received this ten per cent bonus. The men who served in the allied ships did not, I believe, receive the ten per cent bonus, although these men were Canadians. Soldiers who served in allied forces received the same benefits as those who served in our own forces, but here again there is a great discrimination against these men who served this country so well.

The minister also spoke about the dental and medical treatment these men received. I think it is a well-known fact that the only dental treatment which was received by the men of the merchant marine was the extraction of teeth. There was no filling or other attention given to these men. Again, there are many older men in the merchant marine, men who were broken down after the hardships they encountered in the voyages across the Atlantic. These men are not allowed the privileges of the Veterans' Land Act unless they are pensioners. They are not allowed to purchase small holdings. The men of the merchant marine have not the benefit of the civil service preference, which I consider one of the greatest benefits that any man in any service could receive.

As I say, it is not my intention to elaborate any further on this matter. I have spoken of it before. I hope the minister and his department will give it consideration. Last year we in the veterans affairs committee expected that this matter would be given attention. I know the minister will reply that there was no promise made by him; but if he will read the report of the veterans affairs committee he will note that all through it there ran this idea, with good foundation—possibly not from the minister—that something would be done for these men. I will say to the minister that had the members of the veterans affairs committee known—and I know I speak for members of all parties—that these men would

[Mr. Chevrier.]

have to wait for two years and that they would receive such shabby treatment as I feel they are now receiving, they would have insisted in their meetings last year that something be done.

Mr. CROLL: I have just a few words to say about the merchant seamen. The statements which have now been made by the hon. member for Royal bear out my understanding of the intention of the committee on veterans affairs. I have had occasion to look at the record since then, and it appears to me—and I think the minister may agree—that the members were rather the victims of an unfortunate misunderstanding. What happened was this. We intended to give the merchant seamen treatment commensurate with that which was received by other branches of the service.

Mr. BROOKS: That is right.

Mr. CROLL: We were discussing it. It was rather late in the session, sometime in July. We had a great deal of work to do in the committee. About that time there appeared on the order paper a notice of motion in the name of the minister reading, "Leave to introduce a bill respecting compensation for merchant seamen." We had asked the minister or his department to deal with the problem, and we thought the minister had decided to do so.

Mr. CHEVRIER: No.

Mr. CROLL: I said, "we thought". We then appointed a sub-committee, and we specifically withheld from that sub-committee anything to do with merchant seamen. After the sub-committee considered the question and dealt with it, on July 17, 1946, the minister came before the house. He was asked to explain his bill, and we then found out for the first time that, instead of dealing with compensation, he was dealing with workmen's compensation.

Mr. BROOKS: That is right.

Mr. CROLL: As a matter of fact, the hon. member for Royal asked him a question on that day and we were all quite surprised at the answer he received. As reported at page 3533 of *Hansard*, the question asked by the hon. member for Royal was:

Has this anything to do with gratuities and reestablishment credits for seamen who served during the war?

The answer given by the minister was: "Nothing at all." I appeal to the minister on the ground that an injustice is being done these men. He may very well say that it was our duty to bring in a report; but time