

## S. O. 31

According to Mr. Diamond, private and public developers will start taking aboriginal people seriously when they have no other alternative.

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[English]

## MERCHANT MARINERS

**Mr. John Brewin (Victoria):** Mr. Speaker, today in Halifax the Minister of Veterans Affairs has finally announced that the government will introduce legislation to recognize the service in wartime of Canada's merchant mariners.

On my own behalf and on behalf of our party, and particularly the member for Regina—Lumsden who has worked on this cause for years, we applaud the announcement as far as it goes.

Regretfully, however, the announcement falls short of acceptance by the government of the unanimous report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs which called for the full recognition of merchant mariners as veterans with the same status and benefits as Armed Forces veterans.

In World War II and other conflicts, Canada's merchant mariners served this country with courage and sacrifice. Finally they are getting some of the recognition they deserve. I am sure all members of this House will honour their contribution to freedom and pledge to work to see that the promised legislation fully meets the recognition to which they are fully entitled.

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## MERCHANT MARINERS

**Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore):** Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a great day for Canada's merchant seamen. Just a few hours ago the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced in Halifax that Canada's wartime merchant mariners will soon be enjoying all the benefits now available to veterans of our wartime Armed Forces.

Merchant mariners do have some access to most of the programs and benefits available to other veterans, but

there are significant omissions and differences that really rankle them.

New legislation will be introduced to close all the gaps. This means that long-term care will be available to the merchant navy veterans. More of them will have the opportunity to qualify for the veterans independence program. The old six-month restriction has been torpedoed, as have obstacles to disability pensions.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, merchant mariners have been fighting for veteran status. I am proud that my government is the one to do something about it and I commend this minister for making it happen.

On March 17 I told the House about my late uncle, Captain Ernest Shatford of the merchant navy. These changes have come too late for him, but I know he would be absolutely delighted that his shipmates have won their battle.

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## CORE AREA INITIATIVE PROGRAM

**Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, the Core Area Initiative Program of Winnipeg has five days left to live. It is losing funding from both the Tory federal government and the Tory provincial government. Meanwhile, Winnipeg and particularly inner city residents stand to suffer.

How can this government allow a Liberal initiative that has taught job skills to over 2,600 citizens, most of whom remain employed, to die?

As well, the core area initiative works to get young Canadians off the streets and helps revitalize the face of the inner city. Is the problem with this government lack of commitment, failure of leadership, or both? I tell this government it has only five days left to prove its worth to Winnipeggers.

Give the core area initiative a new lease on life. Do not let this success story perish. It has served Winnipeggers well.