

\$50,000 in St. John's and \$50,000 in the outports. I wonder if the chairman could give us some idea of what districts this \$50,000 was spent in?

**Mr. Ashbourne** I am unable to give that breakdown this evening, but we may be able to get those figures. As regards the inspection of hotels and restaurants, the department has supervision over restaurants and the people who work in them. As regards isolation wards on steamers, I think that is an excellent point. I think there is a sick bay on the *Kyle*.<sup>1</sup> I think in the construction of the new boats now in process of being built it would be a good idea to have places on them for sick people. We are a maritime country — lots of people cannot get to a doctor in hospital without taking passage by boat and it is sometimes very necessary for them to try and reach hospital to see whether or not they can be cured. They have no way of travelling, oftentimes, except by these boats. As pointed out by Mr. Miller, it is certainly too bad when these people who are going to seek hospitalisation are, through no fault of their own, forced to occupy staterooms with other passengers who are travelling. When I see the manager of the Railway, Mr. Russell, I will make that suggestion.

**Mr. MacDonald** Page 27 of this report — Veterans' Affairs — something struck me very forcibly: "With regard to the men of the merchant navy, they appear to have been discriminated against. Those who were not recruited through the agents of the Ministry of Shipping received no consideration whatsoever, while those who were so enlisted for foreign service for the duration, unless disabled, received only a small fraction of the benefits of other units, many of them as low as one fifth of the lowest amounts given other members of the forces...." It just shows what short memories governments have. Here you have a body of men whose help was largely instrumental in the winning of the war. These men carried quantities of munitions, food, etc. without which no war could have been won. I do not think any member of any other service will deny that they took exceptional risks in doing this work. Yet when the war is all over, they are forgotten. I wonder if the Committee asked why the men of the merchant navy were discriminated against?

**Mr. McCarthy** I would like to say I was going

to make that point. I would like to add further, we find in this report — Civil Re-establishment Plan, under Veterans' Affairs — under plan A, \$4,000 to \$6,000 is being spent for higher education; under plan B, ex-servicemen who want to settle in their own areas on a farm are entitled to approximately \$2,500; we find a man starting a small business and he gets about \$500. I am not supporting all the accusations made by Mr. Vardy, but we also find fishermen who stay home and want to go fishing will get \$500, and if he needs an engine, for instance, he will possibly get \$700. We find in the Fisheries Report that our fisheries are still the economy of our country. Yet, as Mr. Vardy stated, these men wore the same uniform, they fought on the same front and still they are only entitled to \$500 to \$700. I wonder if your Committee enquired as to why that decision was made as regards these different rates?

**Mr. Ashbourne** I would ask Mr. Vardy to answer that question. He was a member of the merchant navy during the war and was chairman of the sub-committee.

**Mr. Vardy** I think Mr. Ashbourne will agree that it is simple for me to answer these questions. From the very start I kept up my interviews and consultations with various men in connection with this scheme. As far as the merchant navy men are concerned, Mr. MacDonald will be surprised to know that out of 3,000 men, only about 60 received anything, and some of them as low as \$20. We have that evidence from no less a person than the Director of Civil Re-establishment.

**Mr. Smallwood** Sixty?

**Mr. Vardy** Yes, 60. Now they have the scheme changed. They give these men, if they are on relief, a limited amount of unemployment benefit. The limit any of these men can get, if they served from 1939-45, is \$700. That is the top limit. These men signed the same articles that men signed in the Royal Navy, the RAF or the Royal Artillery. They had to sign in triplicate up here at the Newfoundland Railway office or at Bowring's office — forms to the effect they were volunteering for the duration, unless disabled. I have these forms, I signed them myself. The men of the merchant navy did a good job and the men of the tug service did a good job and are deprived

<sup>1</sup>Newfoundland Railway coastal steamer serving Labrador.