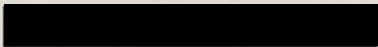
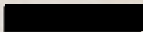
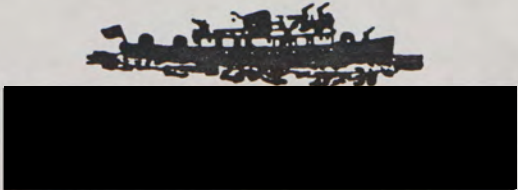


Assistant Editor,
"SIDELIGHTS"



DEER PARK, N.Y. 11729


Deer Park, NY 11729

February 26, 1992

C-SPAN (Mr. Brian Lamb)
400 North Capital Street
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Back in 1966 SS BATON ROUGE VICTORY (of the U.S. Merchant Marine) was sunk in the Saigon River as the result of hostile enemy (VC) fire. Seven U.S. merchantmen were killed in action at their combat stations in BATON ROUGES' engine room.

Even though the ship was assigned to the military command in Vietnam, and carrying combat military material (like thousands of other USMM ships have in post-WWII combat zones), those seven merchant sailors' names have not been placed on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in DC. To my knowledge BATON ROUGE VICTORY was the only deep-draft vessel sunk by enemy fire since WWII (someone correct me if I'm wrong), yet DoD steadfastly has blocked all post-WWII USMM war service from veteran recognition. DoD also blocked all WWII USMM war service for eleven years (under PL 95-202) until a U.S. Court Judge ordered them to cut it out. This, despite the fact that the USMM suffered the highest casualty rate in WWII next to the USMC.

Title 46 CFR ^(*) Subpart B "prescribes" the USMM in "ranks, grades, and ratings" as is recognized "for the personnel of the Coast Guard." That is, within the military infrastructure (paralleled to other U.S. Sea Services) of the U.S. MARITIME SERVICE. By virtue of this enactment, and for all intent and purpose, sailors of the USMM are part of the "total force" military infrastructure of the UNITED STATES, which should be especially recognized in wartime situations (viz., "Police actions" etc.)


(similar to those performed in other U.S. Sea Services) should get the same recognition as "prescribed for the personnel of the Coast Guard."

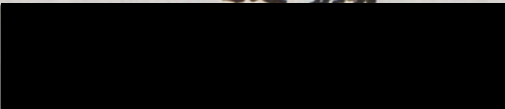
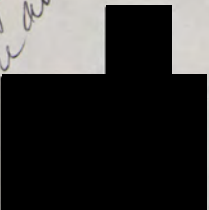
(*) SEC. 310....

P.S. Perhaps you should have someone from DoD on your call-in show to talk about this. I'd like to be there too as Ass't. Editor for "SIDELIGHTS"....

Fraternally yours,


cc: various vets & military groups...

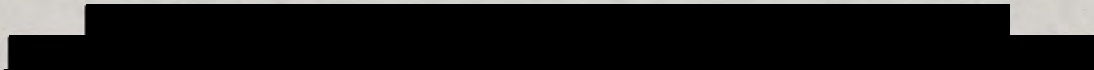
This is a resubmitted letter. I was hoping to hear from you about it...

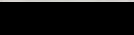

Deer Park, NY 11729

January 31, 1992

C-SPAN (Mr. Brian Lamb)
400 North Capital Street
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

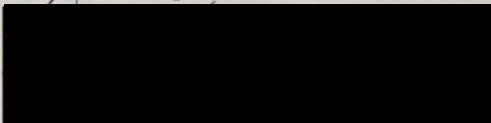

we were taught U.S. maritime history. As we got to the 20th Century segment our instructor said that it was quite evident in his mind that a drastic reduction of the U.S. merchant fleet after World War I led to the Great Depression.  to me that was quite a profound statement. But as Al Smith used to say, "let's look at the record." History has sure repeated itself in recession after recession - since World War II ended. Just "...look at the record...."

The big push to reduce our merchant fleet came in 
 laid-off from federal marine service (with a family) unable to get any kind of suitable work in the maritime field. The down-slide in our economy had begun in earnest. While I was lucky in being able to apply my skill in another area of the maritime field (in civil service) our Congress quickly gave our maritime trade entities away to our former enemies - and the rest of the world too....

So here we are at the threshold of economic disaster. Mr. Lamb, if we are to survive, the U.S. Merchant Marine must be resuscitated. The first step, and perhaps the most important, has got to be a 15% "cargo preference" measure which mandates that a certain amount of (15%) U.S. cargo must be carried on U.S. ships. At the present U.S. ships carry about 4%.... A proportionate inland waters and shoreside support industry must be established as well.

I think you folks in the media should start looking into my proposal - as outlined in the enclosed piece which I've been circulating around. How about running this on your AM "call-in" show?

P.S. I would like to serve as a panel member, as Assistant Editor for SIDELIGHTS, in discussing the above matter. Also, I feel someone from the general public (like myself) should be present during all of your panel discussions....

Sincerely,


ENCL: "PEACE DIVIDEND MINUS ONE"

MY NATION AND THEE
(A Mariner's Prayer)

Almighty God, lest I lay my
life down for my nation
and thee

Though my nation rewards my
war service with nil - and
dubious apathy

I went into harm's way on
gallant ships of our
U.S. Merchant Marine
Upon turbulent waters where
past comrades died, and
now lie restive, serene

Lord, help remove the cloak
of injustice that still
plagues me

So's I may go to my rest with
honor, for valiant service
to my nation - and thee...


NOV. 20, 1991

(THIS POEM IS DEDICATED TO ALL POST-WWII USMM SERVICE)

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