

*Supply—Transport*

view of the representations made and evidence submitted—

—that an independent committee be set up by the government to study the proposal for a Canadian coastguard, and if formation of a Canadian coastguard is recommended, to outline its functions and organization.

However, this recommendation came to nothing; and, as was commented by the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* of July 12, 1946, "Trying to sell Ottawa a coastguard idea is like ploughing the sand". The provincial government of British Columbia has gone on record in favour of a coastguard service, as has the British Columbia command of the Canadian Legion. The Annapolis Royal board of trade and the Annapolis valley boards of trade have also endorsed the proposal. The Nova Scotia command of the Canadian Legion submitted that the establishment of a coastguard would be in line with the rehabilitation policy of the dominion government—

—in that it would provide employment for ex-naval personnel, many of whom would be particularly well qualified for work of this nature.

On January 15, 1949, the Vancouver merchants' exchange submitted a brief on behalf of the Vancouver Merchants' Exchange Limited, the fishing vessel owners' association, the Canadian merchant service guild, the ship owners' association (deep sea) of British Columbia, the British Columbia tow boat owners' association, the Vancouver board of trade, the salmon cannery's operating committee, Lloyd's agency, the Board of Marine Underwriters of San Francisco Incorporated, the Vancouver chamber of shipping, the coastwise operators' association of British Columbia, and the naval officers' association of British Columbia. This brief set out the geographical nature of the coast of British Columbia and the urgent necessity for the setting up of a coastguard. It is much too long to quote today, but I can assure hon. members that it was a very well reasoned argument. Apparently, however, it proved of no avail.

Then in March of the present year the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada added its voice to all the others in requesting the establishment of a Canadian coastguard service for both coasts and the great lakes. According to the *Vancouver Sun* of August 17, 1949, the fishermen's union of Vancouver made a demand upon the government for a coastguard service; and in another item appearing in the same newspaper in April, 1949, it is stated that representatives of thirteen coastal organizations met with Mr. J. C. Lessard, deputy minister of transport, and Mr. Jack V. Clyne, chairman of the

[Mr. Higgins.]

maritime commission, to discuss the possibility of a coastguard for British Columbia.

Another strong and informed voice has joined the rising demand for a Canadian coastguard service. The dominion council of the naval officers' association of Canada, representing thousands of former naval officers from coast to coast, has unanimously endorsed such an undertaking. The action of the dominion council was taken last summer, during the annual meeting in Halifax. The council unanimously approved a resolution presented by the Halifax branch—

—urgently and strongly recommending the immediate formation of a Canadian coastguard service.

The resolution's preamble points out that the expansion of our naval and merchant service activities during world war II gave this nation a new sense of sea power and its attendant responsibilities, and that our responsibilities have increased with the addition of another seafaring province, Newfoundland. It holds that:

The present distribution of marine responsibilities among several government departments would seem to be less efficient than a unified co-ordinated service.

And that:

It is not in accord with national dignity to be repeatedly obligated to the United States coastguard.

The preamble also notes that a Canadian coastguard service would:

Provide a corps of trained and disciplined men under service regulations which would supplement the Royal Canadian Navy in the event of war.

A series of suggestions accompanied the resolution. They include the idea that a Canadian coastguard would carry out the duties of the following departments or agencies: R.C.M.P. marine division, which is held to be the logical nucleus around which to build a coastguard; fisheries patrol; Department of Transport marine and meteorological service, excluding certain port duties such as steamship inspection and examination of masters and mates; lifesaving and sea rescue duties; hydrographic survey duties.

The resolution stated:

It is considered desirable to absorb personnel of departments taken over, but it is strongly suggested that the qualifications for further enlistment of officers and men in the proposed coastguard service be fully as exacting as those of the Royal Canadian Navy.

And finally, the resolution stated:

In view of the record and experience of the United States coastguard service, we consider that it might well be used as a working model.

Here then, Mr. Chairman, is a considered opinion approved unanimously by a council representing thousands of former officers with