

the White Ensign of the Empire's naval services. R.C.N. ships have been assigned duties of Naval Patrol in the Caribbean and in other special territories from time to time.

Guarding Canadian Shores

The R.C.N. is constantly on guard in Canadian coastal waters. The monotonous but vital work of submarine patrol is carried on in the St. Lawrence River itself.

The R.C.N. works closely with coastal reconnaissance squadrons of the R.C.A.F. in this vital task. Every day minesweepers steam out from Canadian ports to go about their dangerous job.

Fishermen's Reserve

The West Coast of Canada, with its deep indentations and myriad small islands, presents a special problem for patrol. The mainland itself stretches 1,580 miles; the islands are another 3,980 miles -- a total of 5,560 miles to watch over. No orthodox naval force that Canada could put in the water could guard this great length of coastline. But Canada found the answer to this problem ready at hand.

In the early months of 1939, a third reserve for the Navy was formed, drawn from men in the west coast fishing industry. These men know the waters as only fishermen could. Their boats, which they brought with them into the Reserve, were built to negotiate the inlets of the coast. These craft were quite large and sturdy, and were easily converted into patrol boats.

But the Fishermen's Reserve was ready to do more than patrol work. Boats were fitted up for minesweeping, and when the war broke out this dangerous, but most essential job was undertaken by them on the west coast.