

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Does the minister mean convoy shipping?

Mr. MACDONALD (Kingston City): I am just coming to that. The reason for this condition is to be found in the difficulty of providing convoys for all ships that ply the seas, and the very fact that the enemy has had such a considerable degree of success against non-convoys is proof of the effectiveness of the convoy system. We must provide merchant ships to replace those that have been lost; but, Mr. Speaker, merchant ships alone are helpless to-day, in a war of this character. To the utmost limit of our ability to produce and man them, we and our allies must turn out fighting ships to guard our freighters, our tankers, our supply ships of all kinds that are carrying the products of our farms and factories over the seas. It would be vain and fruitless for us to speed up and greatly increase our production of war supplies for overseas, unless we could transport those supplies overseas. It would be senseless for us to encourage our farmers to produce more and more food for our allies if we could not carry that food to them.

I come now to the growth of the Canadian navy. I may remind hon. gentlemen that when I first spoke to the House of Commons on naval matters I pointed out that at the beginning of the war the Canadian navy had some fifteen ships available for service; and at the time of my first speech, in November, 1940, I was able to say that this number had increased to 155 ships. At that time I expressed the hope that by the end of the fiscal year 1941-42, that is by last March 31, we might reach the figure of 250 ships. I can now say that this figure has been far exceeded, and that at the end of the last fiscal year there were more than 400 ships flying the white ensign and under the command of the Royal Canadian Navy. These ships range from auxiliary cruisers down to destroyers, corvettes, mine-sweepers, motor patrol boats, motor torpedo boats, and a large number of other auxiliary craft. So that in ships alone the navy to-day is nearly thirty times as great as it was at the outbreak of war.

What about man-power? When the war began the number of men in the navy was 1,774. In late 1940 we planned to have about 23,000 men in the navy by the end of the then coming fiscal year, that is, by March 31, 1942. That was our estimate of strength at that time, but that figure too has been well exceeded. Instead of 23,000 men, on that date the Royal Canadian Navy had more than 31,000 men, or an eighteen-fold increase over the figure at the outbreak of war. These men have been enlisted in all parts of Canada. Most of

them have come from the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, of which there are some eighteen divisions in the dominion, from Charlottetown on the east to Vancouver on the west. Every province has given its share of men, though I am bound to say that the provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia, where the tradition of the sea is strong, have given larger numbers per capita than the other provinces. But as I have said, we have had our share of recruits from all provinces. We have had them from the banks of the St. Lawrence and the Quebec seacoasts, from the shores of the great lakes, from the province of Manitoba, as well as from the prairie provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and there is no lack whatever of recruits for the navy; there is still a very considerable waiting list for that service.

Most of our men serve on Canadian ships or in Canadian shore establishments, but more than 1,100 Canadians are serving with the Royal Navy on every type of ship. You will find them in battleships of the British navy, in cruisers, in destroyers, in corvettes, in motor boats, in submarines and in every other type of craft. You will find them on every sea. They have fought in every part of the world—in the Atlantic, in the Pacific, in the Indian ocean and the Mediterranean sea. As a matter of fact when the Royal Navy cruiser *Dorsetshire* was sunk in the Indian ocean a few weeks ago, no fewer than six of her officers were Canadians, among them the son of my colleague the Minister of Munitions and Supply. Fortunately all those young Canadian officers were saved when that ship went down.

The personnel, the man-power of the Canadian navy, depends on several factors. One of these, of course, is the number of men available. In this respect, as I have pointed out, there is no shortage. A second factor is the number of ships. Here for some time the production of ships and the training of men have proceeded at an almost equal pace. But the third factor, which is now beginning to constitute one of the main problems of the navy, is the supply of properly trained officers and petty officers. The training of these men is of necessity, from the very nature of the case, long and varied. They can learn some things on shore, but after they have had all the training that can be given on land there is still a long period of sea training necessary before you have an efficient officer or petty officer. Normally—I am speaking now of peace time—a man would not be given command of a ship unless he had served for some years at a school or shore establishment, then

[Mr. Macdonald (Kingston City).]