

*National Defence Act Amendment*

The year 1910 was a fairly meaningful one for the R.C.N. I am not going back into the past but am simply giving a young man's appreciation of the contribution made by our naval service over the last 57 years and what this contribution has meant to the world. I should like to recall some dates to hon. members, such as June 1, June 3, June 19 and August 4. They were all milestones. On August 4, H.M.C.S. *Rainbow* was commissioned at Portsmouth. It may be recalled that H.M.C.S. *Rainbow* was the first ship to enter the Royal Canadian Navy. H.M.C.S. *Niobe* followed on September 6. Again, I am sure all hon. members are very much aware, or at least they should be, of the very gallant record of the *Niobe*.

In so far as things historical are concerned, a few minutes ago the minister told us that what he was doing was laying before the Canadian people the role of our armed forces for the next 50 years. He knows better than that, and I think we all know better than that. We are all aware of the fact that no matter what we do with our armed forces today they will be obsolete in three years' time, so rapid are the technological changes which are taking place. We are all aware of this.

I remind the minister that on October 1, 1910, Atlantic command was established—in other words, maritime command. There is nothing new about it at all because 57 years ago we had a maritime command. On October 13 of that same year dockyard and Admiralty House in Halifax were transferred to Canadian ownership. This was a very meaningful event in terms of the economic and social life of Atlantic Canada. These are very real things and are not passed over easily.

On November 8, still in that year, *Rainbow* arrived in Vancouver. These things should not be treated lightly. On May 4 of that year dockyard at Esquimalt was formally transferred. On May 18, 1914, the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve was established by order in council and on August 4 war was declared. His Majesty's Canadian ships were placed under admiralty operational control. On that date *Rainbow* sailed to seek S.M.S. *Leipzig*, and to protect H.M. ships *Algerine* and *Shearwater*, other great Canadian names.

On August 5 two submarines built at Seattle for Chile and purchased by the premier of British Columbia were delivered to the R.C.N. off Trial Island. H.M.C.S. *Niobe* sailed from Halifax in September of that year to complete her complement at St. John's, Newfoundland. Again, we find evidence of the

expansion of this Canadian contribution to the world. On November 1 the first four Canadian casualties were suffered by our Canadian naval service. H.M.S. *Good Hope* took part in this battle and was carrying four Canadians in her crew.

There are other dates that are very significant in terms of the Royal Canadian Navy. There was the explosion in 1917 at Halifax. In connection with all of these things the Royal Canadian Navy has been geared to give comfort to man in an hour of crisis or disaster. After the war, in 1920, naval demobilization was completed. In 1921 we got some more submarines for training purposes and our fleet began to grow. On June 16 the Royal Naval College disappeared and became something a little bit more identifiable with our own Canadian needs. In 1923 the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve were established.

On July 1, 1923, H.M.C.S. *Stadacona* was commissioned in Halifax. This was one of the most significant events that happened in the 218 years of history the city of Halifax has enjoyed. Its role has been immeasurable in many respects, Mr. Chairman. On March 1, 1928, we added more ships, the *Champlain* and the *Vancouver* which were to replace the old *Patriot* and the *Patrician*. On February 27, 1939, we lost H.M.C.S. *Thiepsval* in Barkley Sound, British Columbia. On May 22, 1931, H.M.C.S. *Saguenay* was commissioned, followed by H.M.C.S. *Skeena*. These two ships are very significant in terms of our Canadian navy. These were the first two ships to be commissioned in Canada on the basis of Canadian design, engineering and talent.

On July 1, 1934, Commodore P. W. Nelles became our chief of naval staff, the first Canadian trained officer to receive this appointment. We see here the evolution and development which has taken 57 years to bring about. On July 26, 1936—I was four years old at the time—a royal guard from H.M.C.S. *Saguenay* paraded at Vimy Ridge for the unveiling of the Canadian memorial by King Edward VIII. This was the first royal guard provided by the R.C.N. for the person of the monarch. These are milestones in our development.

I see one hon. member opposite paying some attention and that is the chairman of the defence committee who must be very familiar with these facts. He must indeed feel some sadness in his heart today at what is taking place. I am not old fashioned. I am in favour of progress. These things all happened