

year, and sweep thoroughly the channel that is to be used by ships during the next twenty-four hours. No more monotonous task can be imagined, unenlightened as yet by any sign of enemy action, but still these officers and men in their little ships carry on day after day, to make the approaches to our harbours safe for the ships that carry Empire trade across the seven seas. Other auxiliary craft are fitted with anti-submarine devices, and their task too is arduous and unexciting, for they must patiently await the possible appearance of enemy submarines.

I spoke of the control of merchant shipping. The convoy system was instituted at once upon the outbreak of war, and one of our eastern Canadian ports has become one of the most important convoy assembly ports, if not indeed the most important, in the British Empire. In the past eight months hundreds of ships have been assembled in this great natural harbour, organized into convoys, and sailed safely across the Atlantic ocean. In point of tonnage, some of the largest convoys ever to sail the seas, in this or any other war, left our eastern ports during the period when one of the enemy's so-called pocket battleships was known to be at large in the North Atlantic. The administrative side of the convoy system is carried out by the naval control service, and Canadian naval control service officers and staffs are functioning at all important ports in the Dominion. The unification of control of this vast, world-wide system is maintained by the Admiralty, with Naval Service Headquarters as its immediate liaison on the North American continent. Our Canadian Navy has received the highest commendation from the British naval authorities.

Although my description of naval activities has been so far confined to the east coast of Canada, to a large extent the same may be said for the Pacific coast, except that at present the convoy system is not in operation in the Pacific. But coast-lines must be patrolled, channels searched for mines, and anti-submarine patrols and all the many and varied tasks which the term "coast defence" implies must be carried out.

In order that our larger and more important harbours may be made safe and sure refuges, where ships and men may rest confident that they are, for a short while at least, free from the strain of watching and waiting for attack by an enemy that is so often unseen, it is necessary that such ports should be adequately defended from every possible form of enemy attack. This duty is carried out by means of close co-operation among the three services, all of whom have their part to play.

The Navy's share includes an examination service, by which every ship entering is carefully examined by officers experienced in this type of work; a port war signal station, which reports these ships as they arrive to the various units of the defensive arrangements; an anti-submarine net; sometimes anti-torpedo nets; and certain underwater defences. Plans for this widespread organization had been prepared long before the war, down to every last detail, and the whole system went into action and was functioning efficiently almost within the first week of war.

In telling you this story of the many and varied activities of our Navy, I must not omit mention of the many administrative problems which had to be solved when the sudden and unprecedented expansion took place in so short a period of time. The men must be fed and clothed; ships must be fuelled and repaired; ammunition in greatly increased quantities must be obtained and distributed; training establishments, barrack accommodation, storage facilities, office space—all these must be thought of, arranged and organized.

I have here a detailed statement showing the number of officers and ratings in the Royal Canadian Navy, but I will not take time to read it now.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: May I suggest that the honourable gentleman place it on Hansard?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Yes, that will go on Hansard.

Royal Canadian Navy

Personnel at May 10:

952 officers
5,662 ratings

6,614 all ranks

(Includes 125 officers and 100 ratings serving in British Navy.)

The personnel is being increased as rapidly as ships come into service. There is provision in the current fiscal year for increase of personnel to 1,450 officers and 10,000 ratings by March 31, 1941.

Ships:

In commission:

7 destroyers
15 minesweepers
6 anti-submarine vessels
15 fishermen's reserve vessels
51 auxiliary vessels

Being converted:

3 high speed merchant ships to light cruisers
(to be completed shortly).

Under construction:

90 vessels, including 54 patrol vessels and 18 minesweepers.

I come now to the Royal Canadian Air Force. We have air squadrons on each coast for patrol and reconnaissance duties. Squadrons from Calgary, Trenton and Ottawa were moved to the Atlantic seaboard when war