

Naval College at Halifax. But it would include those who have enlisted as boys in the Navy under the provisions of the Act, and whose nominal ages are from fourteen to eighteen, but in fact and practice from sixteen to eighteen years. In addition to that, there are some men who have been sworn and enlisted as members of the Naval Service who are doing work on shore at the dockyards, and certain civil work. I understand that the suggestion has been made that it might be desirable to draw some distinction between the men who are actually serving in what is commonly understood as the Navy and those who are doing shore work. It might be possible to make that distinction if desired, just as a distinction is drawn in the military forces between men serving in Canada and those serving overseas.

The qualification which is provided in the Order in Council of September 1st, 1917, regarding the three months' pay given to officers and men on retiring from the Naval Service, has as one of its conditions that the men shall have served continuously for not less than six months during the present war in a sea-going ship, or have served overseas during the present war in the Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve, Overseas Division. The definition of service in a sea-going ship is "Service in a ship of war, not being a depot ship for wharf or harbour service only."

In regard to the boys to whom I have referred I might say that there are less than two hundred of them who have regularly enrolled and enlisted. Their ages, though nominally from fourteen to eighteen, are as a matter of fact from sixteen to eighteen, because we find that very few boys under sixteen enlist for overseas service. The total number enrolled in the Naval Service is about 3882, of whom 1202 are serving overseas on ships of His Britannic Majesty.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Am I correct in assuming that men engaged in mine sweeping and harbour work are not included?

Mr. HAZEN: The men engaged in mine sweeping and patrol are members of the Naval Service. The service they are engaged in is in some cases of a very dangerous character, and is essential to our part in the war. These men are enrolled and form part of the Naval Service.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Does the Government intend enfranchising these? The Sec-

[Mr. Hazen.]

retary of State promised last evening to advise us about this.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I have made inquiries as to the nature of their occupation. In the first place, we are not enfranchising these men at all by this Bill. They are enfranchised under the Military Voters' Act. All that this Bill does is to divide those of female sex into voters and non-voters, and there is of course no reason at all why the female relatives should be debarred simply on account of the age of these boys, for the female relatives are just as old, no matter how old the boys are. These boys are engaged in war work of a character analogous to that of the men overseas. I understand there is considerable peril attached to it, although it is true that so far they have been successful in avoiding it.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Where is the peril?

Mr. MEIGHEN: My information is that they use dynamite. Mine sweeping is always a more or less dangerous occupation. We cannot distinguish between different classes of war work for the sake of this Bill. It would appear to me to be utterly illogical to do so as long as the men are not engaged around our own shores, where, of course, conditions are quite different. These men are engaged in active service in connection with the war, and there is a measure of peril attached to their occupation.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: What about those who are working on shore in the Naval Service?

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is where we make a distinction. It may be that there is some degree of danger even there, but we have to draw the line somewhere.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Why not exclude all those in the Naval Service who ordinarily are engaged in Canadian waters? Why should the female relatives of a man who happens to be employed on a little tug boat or gasoline launch in Halifax harbour be entitled to vote? I hope the minister will drop this altogether.

Mr. MEIGHEN: We are not entitling these men to vote by this Bill. Whatever rights these men now have as regards voting, they have by reason of the Military Voters' Bill. It may be that so far there has been no loss in this particular service, but it would be very bold indeed for Parliament to assume that those men were engaged in a peaceful occupation akin to work on