

An hon. MEMBER: The Act was passed before the war.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Lambton): Yes, it was organized before the war, and while the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Duff) was speaking, he was able to say that the Rainbow and the Niobe did excellent work during the war. Yet, he is perfectly satisfied to say that these new vessels that have been completed since 1916 are not to be compared with the Niobe and Rainbow that have been in existence for the last twenty-five years. The hon. gentleman knows very well that the latter vessels do not dare to leave the shores of Canada in their present condition. Let us look at the Naval Service Act for just a few moments. It is called "an Act respecting the Naval Service of Canada." It was introduced in this House on the 12th January, 1910, and was assented to on the 4th May following. I want the hon. member to remember that that Act is still in existence, still in force and effect. That Act provides for the establishment of the Department of the Naval Service, full control of naval affairs being vested in the minister of that department. It also provides for the placing of the Naval Service of Canada under the Naval Discipline Act and the King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions, so far as applicable.

Mr. DUFF: Did the hon. member vote for that Act which he is reading from?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: This Act was passed while I was a member of Parliament and if I remember rightly I did not object to it. The Act further provides for the appointment of an officer to be called the Director of the Naval Service, who shall, subject to the regulations and under the instructions of the Minister of the Department, be charged with the directions of the Naval Service, and provides also that the Governor in Council may appoint a naval board to advise the minister in all matters relating to Naval Affairs. It also provides for a Naval Reserve Force, to consist of such persons as join the said reserve after Naval Service, or after undergoing such training as may be necessary, all members of said reserve being liable for active service in emergency. It provides also that the Governor in Council may organize and maintain a Naval Volunteer Force, and that the Governor in Council may place the Naval Force, or any part thereof, on active service at any time when it appears advisable so to do, by reason of an emergency.

Other provisions of the Act may be summarized as follows: In case of emergency the Governor in Council may place at the disposal of His Majesty for general service in the Royal Navy, the Canadian Naval Service, or any part thereof.

The Command in Chief of the Naval Forces is declared to continue and be vested in the King, and shall be exercised and administered by His Majesty or by the Governor General as his representative. The institution of the Royal Naval College of Canada is provided for by that Act also. I would like the hon. member to take particular note of this. He suggests that we should sell the naval dockyards at Halifax and Esquimalt and clean up the whole business, "the dirty mess"; as he calls it. The naval dockyard at Halifax had been taken over by the Canadian Government previous to the enactment of this legislation, or to be exact, on the first January, 1907, and on the 7th November, following the coming into force of this Act in 1910, the dockyard at Esquimalt was taken over. Included in these transfers were the following properties. At Halifax the Royal Naval dockyard and hospital, commander in chief's house and grounds, recreation grounds, and cemetery at Esquimalt, the Royal Naval dockyard and hospital, naval coal stores at Thetis wharf, the magazine establishment at Cole island, the Royal Naval recreation and drill grounds with buildings, and the Royal Naval cemetery chapel.

I should like the hon. member to pay particular attention to this provision: The Dominion Government will maintain the above mentioned properties at Halifax and Esquimalt in a state of efficiency, make any alteration in the buildings, wharves, jetties, etc., or in the present use of the sites; maintain the existing depth of water alongside the frontages of the properties, conveniences at least equal in character to those which exist at present. The Dominion Government will arrange for the stocking of coal or other fuel at Halifax and Esquimalt. But the hon. gentleman would scrap these and if the British navy came to our coast, they would not be able to have their vessels repaired unless these docks were in existence. Here is an important point. In May 1912 arrangements were made between the Canadian and Imperial Governments whereby the Naval Department undertook responsibility for the naval defence of defended ports in Canada. These defences include such matters as regulation of traffic, examination service, minesweeping in the approaches to the ports, establishment of