

To increase the effectiveness of home defences and the defences of territories of strategic importance in relation to the extended ocean lines of communication, action was taken in consultation with the British Government to garrison Iceland with a mixed force of British and Canadian troops. Canadian forces were dispatched to strengthen the defences of Jamaica and Bermuda. In agreement with the Government of Newfoundland, Canadian forces were dispatched to share in the defence of St. John's, including the strategically important air field; these troops have since been augmented. Measures were taken to improve the fixed fortress defences at St. John's and other points.

In June, 1940, the mobilization of the 4th Canadian Division was ordered. Because of the growing seriousness of the situation at this time, and in anticipation of the possible calls that might be made on Canadian manhood, arrangements were completed to draft youths of 21 years of age for a period of military training. The Army authorities were given the responsibility of providing for, administering and training this group which totalled 80,201 men. This required the urgent provision of 39 training centres with winter accommodation, hospitals, parade grounds, equipment, and training and administrative staffs. The original plans, designed to provide a period of thirty days training for each class of recruits, were later extended to provide for four months training to ensure an adequate degree of basic training common to all arms, and a period of specialized training in the particular arm of the Service—or in the R.C.N. or R.C.A.F.—selected by each recruit. Under a recent declaration of policy, recruits now in training and those of subsequent drafts will be retained in the Service and allocated to Home Defence Units. Recruits called up under the compulsory service plan may at any time volunteer for service beyond Canada. Approximately 5,000 men per month are called up for training under the existing arrangement.

In May, 1940, opportunity was afforded the veterans of the War of 1914-18 to take an active part in the present struggle by organization of "The Veterans Guard of Canada", consisting of 29 infantry companies, entirely composed of and commanded by veterans, whose role consists of guarding vulnerable points, performing internal security duties, and acting as guards for the large numbers of prisoners of war and alien internees confined in 15 camps throughout the country. Similar reserve veteran companies were authorized and attached to various units of the Reserve Army.

To reduce the strain on shipping required for the transportation of lumber, British authorities decided to utilize, to the fullest possible extent, available timber supplies in the United Kingdom. An agreement was reached between the two Governments under which 20 Forestry Companies, composed of skilled forestry personnel, were raised in Canada and made available for dispatch to Great Britain.

In August, 1940, the Canadian Armoured Corps was established, and from this an initial formation of one Armoured Brigade Group was mobilized. Steps were taken to increase the strength of the coastal defences by the concentration of a mobile force, comprised of a complete division, within the Atlantic area. This called for the urgent completion of a large engineering program involving the expenditure of \$6,772,511 and requiring the clearing of extensive timber land; the construction of new roads; and the erection of more than 650 new permanent and temporary buildings, including two hospitals of 500 and 250 beds, respectively.

The creation of an "Atlantic" and a "Pacific" Command, to provide for improved operational control of our eastern and western coast defence facilities, was authorized. These Commands provided for the operational control of field forces available within several Military Districts adjoining the coastal areas.