

CHAPTER XXIX.—NATIONAL DEFENCE*

CONSPECTUS

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The 1946 edition of the Year Book at pp. 1077-1078, traces the growth and development of the Canadian Armed Forces from their origin to the end of the War of 1939-45. In the period since the three Services, Navy, Army and Air Force, were at their peak strength, there has been a rapid reduction in personnel. Repatriation and demobilization of Canadian Forces has been completed much more rapidly than was ever anticipated.

The reduction in the personnel of the Armed Forces is given in the following summary:—

<i>Strength and Date</i>	<i>Navy</i>	<i>Army</i>	<i>Air Force</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Strength at peak.	92,880	481,500	215,200	789,580
Strength as of Dec. 31, 1946.	8,481	21,473	12,846	42,800

The Department of National Defence was recently consolidated under a single Minister, and the work of the Navy, Army and Air Force is to be co-ordinated at all possible levels. The object is to achieve the greatest possible economy and efficiency in the Services, so that Canada will have Armed Forces which will meet the defence needs of the country and maintain the high standards of the Forces set in the War.

The Department now has one Minister and one Deputy Minister instead of three; also two associate Deputy Ministers whose responsibilities are based on functional rather than Service requirements. Headquarters of the three Services are being moved to a single site at Ottawa.

The international situation, the proposals made at the recent session of the United Nations, and the rapid changes in types of weapons, are among the considerations which make it undesirable at this time to settle finally the composition or character of the future Armed Forces of Canada. The year 1947 is regarded as a period during which the defence forces will be established on a sound administrative basis, capable of being adapted or developed to meet all possible changing circumstances. The defence organization will be kept on a flexible basis to fit in with any plan of general security or general disarmament as called for by the United Nations and the defence needs of Canada.

The Reserve Forces are an important element in the new organization. Many ex-servicemen joined the Reserves and Auxiliaries and will make their training and experience available to the younger recruits.

Section 1.—The Royal Canadian Navy

The Royal Canadian Navy has undergone two sweeping changes of organization within the past seven years. The outbreak of the Second World War found the Navy equipped with six River Class Destroyers, averaging 1,500 tons, and five small minesweepers. Personnel consisted of 131 officers and 1,643 men of the permanent

* Revised under the direction of W. Gordon Mills, Deputy Minister, Department of National Defence, Ottawa.