

In 1922, the National Defence Act was passed which consolidated the Department of Militia and Defence, the Naval Service and the Air Board into the Department of National Defence. A Defence Council was also set up consisting of a President (the Minister), a Vice-President (the Deputy Minister), and the following associate members: the Chief of General Staff and the Chief of Naval Staff, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster General and the Director of the R.C.A.F.

From this beginning, the growth of each of the three National Defence Services is traced to the outbreak of the War of 1939-45 in the Year Books published from 1930 to 1938; at pp. 1041-1046 of the 1938 edition is shown the strength of each Service prior to that War. During the War of 1939-45, the Canadian Armed Forces expanded to 1,000,000 men and 47,000 women. These figures exceeded by more than 60 p.c. the 620,000 who went overseas or remained in training in Canada in 1914-18. The strength of the Army personnel alone was 730,000, including 25,000 women. Of this total, 630,000 were volunteers and over 370,000 all ranks served in the European zone. In addition, 14,000 troops served in operational units in Hong Kong, Alaska and the islands of the Atlantic.

The strength of the Air Force grew from 4,606 in September, 1939, to a peak of 206,350, including 15,153 women, in December, 1943. The signing of the British Commonwealth Air Training Agreement in December, 1939, whereby Canada undertook the general administration and management of the combined program, placed on the shoulders of the R.C.A.F. a major burden and responsibility (see pp. 1090-1099).

The Royal Canadian Navy expanded during the War from a personnel of 3,922 to a total enlistment of 107,226, the top strength at any one time being 92,880 on active service and 3,000 reserves. The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service contributed 6,783 to the total enlistments.

The two world wars of this century, especially the one just concluded, have proved that national defence is a combined operation which must be co-ordinated on a national scale. No longer is it possible for the Defence Services to administer its affairs in separate unrelated compartments. All must work together as a closely co-ordinated unit and under an integrated policy. Experience gained during the War of 1939-45 with the Axis Powers amply demonstrated this fundamental principle and the rapid disintegration of the enemy in Europe after the invasion of the Continent on June 6, 1944, was the direct result of its application. In particular, the experience of the War demonstrated the decisive importance of the technical initiative and of the role of science and industry in total war. In this field, Canada made a substantial contribution to the Allied cause. With the object of continuing effective integration of the common scientific research of the Navy, Army and Air Force and of civilian science and industry, the Government appointed, at the end of 1945, a Director General of Defence Research to head what will be, in effect, a fourth Defence Service.

The following sections review each of the Services.

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 War of 1939-45 found it equipped with six River class destroyers, averaging 1,500 tons, and five small minesweepers. Personnel consisted of 145 officers and 1,748 men of the permanent service (R.C.N.) and 222 officers and 1,807 men of the combined Royal Canadian Naval Reserve, Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, and Royal Canadian Fleet Reserve.