

THE SIXTY-THIRD CONGRESS WAS GENEROUS TO THE NAVY

Appropriations Liberal and Applied Where Most Vitally Needed—Expenditures Ashore Reduced to a Minimum—Everything Subordinated to Battle Fleet.

Washington, D. C., March 6.—The Sixty-third Congress has been more generous than any other in providing for the navy, having authorized in the two naval appropriation bills an entire division of five dreadnaughts which will cost one hundred million dollars, three sea-going submarines which will cost \$1,000,000 each, twenty-three submarines which will cost about \$500,000 each, twelve torpedo boat destroyers averaging in cost about \$200,000 each, and a fuel ship to cost \$1,000,000.

The total appropriation for increase of the navy authorized by the Sixty-third Congress is \$661,145,521, showing an increase over the Sixty-second Congress by the Sixty-third Congress of \$29,529,455.52 for additional ships for the navy. To this should be added \$1,000,000 for aviation and \$600,000 for submarines, appropriated from savings effected in expenditures ashore over the last fiscal year. This \$1,600,000 of money appropriated for reasons of economy effected should be added to the \$661,145,521 making \$662,745,521 for new construction.

The real reason that will be made by the navy as a result of this liberal and intelligent treatment by this Congress cannot be expressed by dollars and cents. Any person or any Congress can spend money, but no other Congress has gone so far to see that its appropriation was applied where most vitally needed and without regard to merely political considerations. Everything has been subordinated to the battle fleet and its efficiency. The increase of appropriations of previous Congresses, for unreasonably costly buildings at Navy yards, which has been as justly criticized by former Secretary of the Navy Meyer in the public press have been done away with. Expenditures ashore have been reduced to an absolute minimum and in this connection it is pleasant to record the cheerful cooperation of the Democratic members of Congress from navy yard districts who have patriotically risen to the occasion and cheerfully acquiesced in the desire of the department to first of all increase the strength and efficiency of the fleet. Of perhaps even greater importance than the mere physical additions to the fleet are the steps which have been taken towards increasing the personnel and modernizing the military organization of the navy.

The "Pucking Board," which had outlived its usefulness, has been abolished and a system of promotion to take its place will be one of the first things taken up by the new Congress when it assembles.

Comparison of Estimates and Appropriations

A comparison of the estimates of the bill with the recommendations in the annual report of the Secretary of the Navy for the fiscal year 1914, and the accompanying estimate for the fiscal year 1913-14 shows how closely Congress followed the thought and reasoning of this report. The building program recommended by the Secretary was:

- 2 dreadnaughts
- 5 destroyers
- 5 submarines of 1000 tons
- 10 of the sea-going and 2 of the coast defense type, with supplementary recommendations for a larger number in the marine craft superintending generally therefor without reducing the appropriation for other classes, and \$100,000 for education.

The building program recommended by Congress is as follows:

- 5 dreadnaughts
- 6 destroyers
- 2 sea-going submarines
- 14 smaller submarines
- 1 fuel ship
- 1 million dollars for aviation

Naval Reserve Provision

Perhaps the best piece of legislation for the navy in a decade is the provision in the present bill authorizing a naval reserve. It creates a naval reserve composed of only honorably discharged personnel to be on graded pay according to the length of time they have served. This not only provides a reserve of trained and experienced men, ready upon a day's notice to man our reserve ships and to supplement the war complements of ships of the battle fleet, but it also provides a means for the retention of men whose services are particularly valuable. It is believed that this feature of the bill will place our enlisted force on a better status than that of any other navy in the world. The bill also provides that the reserve may be called up to serve in the navy, and that the length of service in the reserve shall be extended to ten years, and that the rate of pay shall be increased from that of a private to that of a sergeant.

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were used abroad during the occupation of Vera Cruz, and the navy aviators were able to render valuable service. The war in Europe has shown the great importance of air craft. The conference report makes a new departure in aeronautics in the navy and appropriate \$1,000,000 for the development of aeroplanes and the purchase of modern air craft. Heretofore the appropriations for aeronautics have been divided among the several bureaus. It is now concentrated, and with the school at Pensacola and the larger appropriations, navy aeronautics will become a much more effective agency.

In addition, the bill provides for an advisory committee for aeronautics. It is believed that this advisory committee will be the authority given to a group of officers of the army and navy, and men skilled in aeronautical engineering and its allied sciences, will bring together the aeronautic services of the government and the various branches the valued results of study and investigation.

The aeronautic service is particularly hazardous and calls for men of enterprise and daring. The bill provides proper compensation for the courageous men who undertake this dangerous service for the navy, and permits the Secretary of the Navy to assign to this service officers of higher rank than has heretofore been available.

The conferees have voiced public sentiment in favor of a large increase in the fighting power of the navy, and they have new construction, to ships designed the most effectively in time of war. The European conflict has demonstrated the use of submarines, with a speed of 20 knots or more, if possible, but not less than 24 knots. It is estimated that the cost of a submarine of this size, with a displacement of not less than 1,100 tons, and as far as is readily known the largest produced by any country, is \$1,000,000.

The total appropriations authorized by this bill for the navy is \$662,745,521, which is \$11,600,000 in excess of the appropriation for the navy in this bill. If to the new construction carried in this bill is added the amount for new construction authorized at the last session of this Congress, which was \$41,991,234, it will be seen that the increase of the navy authorized by the 63rd Congress is \$157,591,235, which is \$21,229,455.52 more than was carried in the appropriation bill of the 62nd Congress for increase of the navy. The total appropriations authorized for the navy in this bill is \$662,745,521, which is \$11,600,000 in excess of the appropriation for the navy in this bill.

... the rights of agony seen the dead, the dying, the maimed, yet happy to feel that help had been given to them to the north. Some were carried out from the ruins, wounded and carried to medical staff, hungry people were fed, one group of wounded men were brought to the hospital, and were again covered with straw so that the poor creatures actually declared that they had gotten warm. Words fail to describe all that they saw. The return trip, which should have been made in three hours, was delayed by the delay in the train, lasted twenty hours.



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