

CHAPTER XV.—CONSTRUCTION

CONSPECTUS

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Section 1 of this Chapter deals with the Government controls made necessary by wartime conditions, Government aid to civil construction under the Dominion Housing Acts, and contains an outline of industrial, military and civilian construction undertaken for war purposes.

Section 2 gives the value of construction contemplated, as shown by contracts awarded and building permits issued, to the end of 1944, and is therefore in the nature of a forecast of work still to be undertaken. Section 3 combines statistics of the Annual Census of Construction in summary form; these statistics cover the bulk of building and construction work actually completed to the end of 1943 and are comprehensive inasmuch as they include all types of construction dealt with in Sections 1 and 2 that were actually completed by the end of the year stated; they are not, however, all-inclusive as is pointed out at p. 454.

Section 1.—The Government and the Construction Industry

Subsection 1.—Government Control of Construction*

From the outbreak of war in 1939 to 1941, the rapid expansion of industry taxed the nation's resources to such an extent that Canada was forced to impose restrictions on new construction, repairs and alterations and, for this purpose, the Department of Munitions and Supply established a Construction Control.

The Control immediately placed on a permit basis almost all construction projects other than those of a minor nature. The dollar value of total cost below which new construction, repairs and alterations could be carried on without the requirement of a licence from the Controller of Construction were progressively lowered until early in 1944 when some slight relaxation was allowed.

Restrictions on construction were indirectly imposed by regulations limiting the use of various building materials, administered by such authorities as the Timber Controller and the Steel Controller of the Department of Munitions and Supply. These and other agencies worked closely with the Construction Control.

Subsection 2.—Government Aid to Civil Housing

The construction industry, characteristically sensitive to general economic influences, suffered far more during the severe depression of 1929-36 than most sections of industry. To alleviate depressed conditions in such an important industry, and also in recognition of the widespread benefits that result directly and indirectly from construction activity, the Dominion Government did much after 1934 to stimulate building by encouraging private construction.

* Prepared by the Publicity Branch, Department of Munitions and Supply.