

Commissioners for Canada. This Branch is concerned with all aspects of the transportation problem in terms of development and collection of statistical data, economic analyses and advice on transportation problems (see p. 658).

The Special Depreciation Committee.—This Committee was concerned with the approval of applications for Special Depreciation designed to encourage the reconversion, modernization and expansion of Canadian industry (see p. 839 of the 1946 Year Book). Approvals by the Committee in the second post-war year as compared with the preceding period were substantially higher. From November, 1944, to mid-1946, the Committee approved Special Depreciation to the extent of some \$400,000,000, while in the succeeding year an amount of more than \$900,000,000 was approved, giving a total of more than \$1,300,000,000 for the period under which these provisions were in operation. Special Depreciation was a measure designed to meet particular transition needs. Approvals were limited to applications received prior to March, 1947, for projects to be completed before Mar. 31, 1949. By Order in Council P.C. 2487, dated June 24, 1947, an exception was made with regard to ships acquired from War Assets Corporation or built in Canadian shipyards in the period from Apr. 1, 1947, to Dec. 31, 1949. A ship, or that part of a ship, built in this period, is eligible for Special Depreciation.

Crown Companies and Independent Agencies

Canadian Maritime Commission.—Canada's merchant marine and shipbuilding industry have grown from modest proportions to the point where the country has the world's fourth largest merchant fleet and a large shipbuilding and repair potential. For the purpose of consolidating public administration of and encouraging these activities, Parliamentary authority was granted in the summer of 1947 for the establishment of a Canadian Maritime Commission under the Minister of Transport (Bill 336). The Commission, composed of three members, is to recommend policies and measures for the operation, maintenance, manning and development of a merchant marine and a shipbuilding and ship repair industry, to perform duties for the Minister of Transport under the Canada Shipping Act, 1934, and to administer steamship subventions.

Polymer Corporation.—In 1943, when Canadian supplies of natural rubber were cut off by Japan, a \$51,000,000-plant was erected at Sarnia, Ont., as a Crown Company—Polymer Corporation—to produce synthetic rubber. The plant now has a capacity of 48,000 tons of synthetic rubber per year. In addition, a wide variety of by-products are being produced, including hydro-carbon gases, ethylene, butane, isobutylene, butylene, propane, and styrene. These have provided a basis for the establishment of a number of supplementary industries in the Sarnia area.

The organization of the Polymer Corporation is that of a co-ordinating company charged with the financial and administrative control of a number of independent companies. These are: (1) Dow Chemical Co., manufacturing basic ingredients; (2) St. Claire Processing, an Imperial Oil subsidiary, charged with obtaining and preparing petroleum fractions needed to make synthetic rubber; it also makes butyl rubber; and (3) Canadian Synthetic Rubber Co., which produces buna rubber. The last-named Company is controlled jointly by Goodyear, Dominion Rubber, Goodrich and Firestone. All these companies act independently and the finished product is sold by Polymer.

The National Research Council has been instrumental in improving and developing synthetic rubber. At the same time, the Corporation has large research facilities of its own. Canadian universities also participate in research activity.