

Section 2.—Financial Statistics of Waterways

The principal statistics available that give any idea of the cost of waterborne traffic consist of the record of public expenditures on waterways. Such expenditures may be classified as capital expenditures, or investments and expenditures for maintenance and operation. Revenues from operation are also recorded. Undoubtedly, in so far as capital expenditures for the permanent improvements of waterways are concerned, those of the Federal Government cover the major part. There has been some expenditure by municipalities on local harbour facilities, and private capital expenditure is also confined almost entirely to terminal or dockage facilities. The investment in shipping, however, with the exception of the Canadian Government Merchant Marine, Limited, and the Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships, Limited, has come almost entirely from private sources. No figures are available regarding private investment in shipping except those appearing in the reports of the operating companies which cover only a portion of the field. There are no statistics showing the revenues of ship operators from passenger and freight traffic.

Capital Expenditures.—The only figures available of capital expenditures on Canadian waterways are those compiled from the Public Accounts and the annual reports of the Departments of Transport, Public Works and Finance. However, such expenditures cannot be regarded as any indication of the present worth of the undertakings represented. The costs of building canals and other waterways and permanent works to facilitate water transportation in Canada are represented in such reports at their original book values, no deductions having been made from the cumulative totals for depreciation from year to year or for abandonment of earlier works where they had been superseded, as in the first Welland Canals for instance. To this extent such figures are an overstatement of the present value of the works in use. There is a further limitation that should be noted in regard to such figures: they do not include the costs of maintenance and improvements or the operation of these works, such charges having been made to the Consolidated Deficit Account as annual expenditures and not to capital account. Table 21, which shows capital expenditures on canals, marine service and miscellaneous water-transport facilities to have reached the grand total of \$390,953,995, must be interpreted with the above qualifications in mind. In Table 22, the capital values of the fixed assets administered by the National Harbours Board are shown as at Dec. 31, 1948, and 1949: these are in addition to the capital expenditures of Table 21. These figures reflect the capital situation in regard to the national harbours of Canada far better than do those of Table 21 in the case of waterways and facilities, inasmuch as they include all buildings, machinery and durable plant improvements; they also have been subject to deductions for depreciation and the scrapping or abandonment of plant and more nearly approach the present value of the properties under the administration of the National Harbours Board.

Table 23 shows the amounts advanced by the Federal Government to the National Harbours Board for capital expenditures from 1947 to 1949.