OMNIBUS RIVERS AND HARBORS, FLOOD CONTROL, AND RIVER BASIN MONETARY AUTHORIZATION BILL—1968

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RIVERS AND HARBORS,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS,
Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors met at 10:08 a.m. in room 2253, Rayburn Building, the Honorable John A. Blatnik (subcommittee chairman) presiding.

Mr. BLATNIK. The subcommittee will come to order. The Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors is meeting this morning to start hearings on the River and Harbor Act of 1968. We will also meet Wednesday of this week to hear testimony on additional projects and proposed legislation.

The Corps of Engineers has been involved in the improvement of the Nation's rivers and harbors since 1824 when the corps received a small sum to begin the improvement of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Over the years the civil works program of the Corps of Engineers has been greatly expanded to include all phases of comprehensive planning, development, utilization, and conservation of the water resources of the United States for a multiplicity of purposes, including flood control, hydroelectric power, fish and wildlife conservation, recreation, municipal and industrial water supply, water quality, and shore protection.

The navigation program consists of three major parts: foreign and coastwise traffic at coastal harbors and channels, foreign and lakewise traffic at Great Lakes harbors and channels, and traffic limited to the inland and intracoastal waterways. Each of these three systems has more than justified construction and operating costs by savings in transportation costs.

Natural harbors and channels are being progressively improved to provide the great depths required for modern ocean carriers. Depths of 35 feet now generally prevail at major harbors on the Atlantic and gulf coasts, ranging up to 45 feet in New York Harbor. Depths of 30 to 40 feet are generally available along the Pacific coast. Harbors and channels of lesser depth also have been provided for commercial fishing, recreational boating, and harbors of refuge.

The vast water areas of the Great Lakes, joined by improved connecting channels, provide a low-cost transport artery that permits movement of materials and products in huge quantities to advantageously located industrial areas. Controlling depths in the connect-