



Now in service on the South American run, Mississippi Shipping Company's SS Del Norte rides high just after her launching. United States Maritime Commission photo.

to have in addition an adequate number of modern passenger vessels to augment world travel interchange.

If Congress at the new session in January gives the industry the green light we will be able to carry out a program that will provide us a first-class merchant marine. Many will be amazed to hear that this can be accomplished at a total cost to the individual citizen of 54 cents a year over the next 10 years.

It is even more amazing to learn that on the basis of the last 10 years of operation of the American merchant marine this new, balanced fleet will cost so little in the way of subsidy. The phrase "ship subsidy" has been thrown around so loosely by irresponsible people, and for so long, that the very word "subsidy" has gained an evil connotation. People who should know better, used to believe that it took a big chunk of Federal funds to subsidize the American merchant marine. When they are informed that during the period 1936 to 1946 the net operating subsidy was a little more than 2 million dollars a year they can hardly believe it. It is an absolute

fact. But perhaps the best way to explode the fallacy of a huge ship-operating subsidy is to point out that the Government pays considerably less in net operating subsidy to our merchant marine each year than it does to subsidize Cheddar cheese. The comparison is not intended to be ludicrous, but it aptly illustrates the point of how little the public pays to have the security of an indispensable arm of national defense.

The United States Travel Division, the American Society of Travel Agents, the National Association of Travel Officials, and other great travel promotion organizations are equally concerned in continuing a sound national merchant marine policy and they have consistently supported such a policy. It is the intention of the shipowners of the United States to cooperate closely with these Government and private agencies to bring about a balanced fleet that will include a larger number of fine passenger ships. These will be a significant factor in increasing the prestige of the United States on the seas and in augmenting the volume of world travel.

American President Line's *President Cleveland* is briefly framed by San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge as she leaves the west coast port. National Federation of American Shipping photo.

