

group trade review

GROUP FORECAST: profit up 20 per cent

Operating profits of the B&C group for the full year 1973 are expected, on present indications, to show an increase of more than £4,000,000. At the same time, the contribution from dividends and interest will show a reasonable increase while the amount attributable to minority interests will be maintained at about the 1972 level.

After taxation, it is estimated that the overall improvement will be about 20 per cent.

These estimates were made in November, when the B&C board declared an interim dividend for the year ending December 31, 1973. Payable on January 11, the interim dividend was 4.41 per cent (2.205 pence per ordinary stock unit). This represents an equivalent gross amount of 6.3 per cent compared with six per cent paid last year.

The six months ended June 30, 1973, showed a group turnover of £51,500,000 (estimated unaudited figures), as against £49,900,000 in the comparable period of 1972. The operating profit for the six months was estimated at £4,199,000, as compared with £3,048,000 in 1972.

SHIPPING:

B & C orders two StaT 55 tankers

A new B&C order for ships—this time for tankers—was announced on December 17 in a joint statement by B&C and Cammell Laird Shipbuilders Ltd. The order has been placed with the Birkenhead yard by King Line Ltd., and is for two "StaT 55s" (standard tankers 55,000 tons deadweight). Valued in excess of £20 million, the ships are scheduled for delivery in the latter half of 1977.

The StaT 55 is a new generation of larger petroleum products carrier for "clean" and "black" trading, also for the carriage of crude oil. They are able to lift about 55,800 tonnes and have a speed of over 16 knots. Cammell Laird have received orders for seven StaT 55s, five from subsidiaries of Alva Shipping (Holdings) Ltd., part of the Viasov group of companies, and the remaining two by King Line. The brokers for all these orders are Seascope Ltd. of London.

Commenting on these orders, Bernard Jones, managing director of King Line, said

"I am delighted we have been able to place this order with a British yard, particularly as it is the same yard where *Windsor Castle*, flagship of the British & Commonwealth group, was built".

New bulk carrier launched in Spain

The 53,000 ton dwt. bulk carrier *King Charles*, being built for the King Line, was launched December 10 from the Matagorda Yard in Cadiz of Astilleros Espanoles, SA. The ship was named by the Hon. Robina Cayzer, daughter of Lord Rotherwick, B&C deputy chairman.

The dimensions of the ship are as follows:

Length OA	206.75M
Length BP	194.0M
Breadth MLD	29.0M
Depth MLD	18.0M
Load Draft	13.27M
Load Deadweight	53,000 tonnes (approx.)
Load Displacement	64,100 tonnes (approx.)

King Charles will have a service speed of 15 and a quarter knots. The ship including hull machinery and outfit is being built to Lloyds and 100A1 and LMC highest

classification requirements and will be arranged for UMS notation.

There are seven holds and these are suitable for the carriage of grain, coal, ore and most other dry bulk cargoes. The hatch covers are Macgregors push button hydraulic lift and pull. Mooring facilities are arranged for self tensioning.

The main engine is a Sulzer 6RD90, six cylinder, two stroke, single acting, supercharged diesel operating on heavy oil.

The accommodation is of high standard and is fully air conditioned. The captain and chief engineer officer each have a suite of rooms and all officers have their own toilet rooms.

This is the second bulk carrier to be launched this year for the King Line, while a further 80,000 ton carrier is due to be launched next year from the Sestao Yard in Bilbao.

Union-Castle selling for Safmarine in UK

Since October 1 Union-Castle have been acting as general passenger agents for South African Marine Corporation (UK) Ltd. All enquiries concerning passages by cargo/passenger vessels sailing under the Saf-

■ *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, the original of the fun car from the film of that name, waits on its trailer at the Southampton docks before being shipped in Clan Ross. Insured for £25,000, the car was on its way to South Africa recently. Picture: Solent News.

