

#### PROPOSED STANDARDS COUNCIL

The proposal for the establishment of a Standards Council of Canada, which is being presented to this conference, represents an attempt to overcome these shortcomings, and to provide a sound foundation upon which a viable national system of standardization can be built to meet the needs of the future industrial development of our country.

It is envisaged that the proposed Standards Council would be concerned primarily with standards for the private sector and hence will operate outside of government, and participation will be on a voluntary basis.

#### MAJOR OBJECTIVES

Among its major objectives would be the following:

(1) To foster the formulation of truly national standards and to promote their general adoption in both the public and private sectors;

(2) to provide for the effective co-ordination of the activities of all existing Canadian standards-setting bodies;

(3) to provide for the establishment of standards, where a need arises, which is not met by the existing standards institutions;

(4) to harmonize standards practices in different industrial sectors and to ensure adherence to the consensus principle in standards formulation with particular respect to the interests of the consumer and the public at large;

(5) to provide for effective representation of all Canadian interests in international standardization activities, which have a direct bearing on the access of Canadian products to export markets.

In connection with the latter point, there is a growing recognition in Canada of the advantages in terms of trade in manufactured goods which would accrue from wider use of the International System of Units. While the use of the metric system of measurement is already legal in Canada, its adoption is inhibited by widespread usage of the foot-pound system in the North American market, and the formidable costs of conversion in terms of machinery and measuring equipment. Nevertheless, if one accepts the desirability of S.I. units as a long-term objective, then an institution like the proposed Standards Council would certainly be required to successfully effect their introduction in an orderly and efficient manner. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that the formation of an integrated national standards organization is an essential prerequisite to "metrification", and that its establishment would be justified on this ground alone.

In taking the initiative in proposing the formation of a Standards Council of Canada, the Federal Government has acted in response to the broad national interest and intends to consult fully with all interested governments, industrial and trade associations, and consumer representatives before its implementation.

#### FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

The contribution of the Federal Government in this

regard will be to provide financial support for Standards Council activities at the national and international level, as well as for the operation of its secretariat. Because of the direct impact of standardization on many aspects of our national affairs, I would also expect that representatives of the Federal Government will play an active role in the work of the Council. In addition, the substantial technical expertise, laboratory resources and other services of the various Federal Government agencies will of course be available to assist the Standards Council....

#### TWO-LANGUAGE SURVEY

A survey of proficiency in a second language (English or French) has been announced for employees of the Public Service during April, May and June.

G.A. Blackburn, Director-General of the Language Bureau of the Public Service Commission of Canada, said that it was impossible to plan any expansion of the Commission's present language-training programmes without reliable data on the needs of departments and agencies throughout the Public Service.

Employees in the executive, administrative and scientific and the technical categories whose duties require proficiency in both English and French will be included in the survey. They will be given written and oral tests to see how proficient they are in a second language and, with this information, the Commission will be able to determine the level at which they should begin in the language-training programmes.

Mr. Blackburn, pointing out that in 1967 more than 3,600 public servants in Canada received language training, said it was believed that with the completion of the survey, departments and agencies would be better able to plan for the participation of employees in language-training programmes.

#### HOUSING IN ALBERTA

Alberta's Municipal Acts have recently been amended to establish the Alberta Housing and Urban Renewal Corporation to improve housing and working conditions throughout the province.

The new body will administer and carry out all programmes established by the Housing Act, including programmes produced in partnership with municipal governments and the Federal Government for low-income public and co-operative housing, land assembly and urban renewal projects. It may also be directed to carry out other duties related to housing or housing accommodation in the province. These include the provision of housing for provincial employees, students at provincial educational institutions (other than universities), and some migratory workers.

In the fiscal year 1967-68 Alberta plans to spend \$1.5 million for subsidized housing and \$3.5 million towards the acquisition and clearing of land for urban renewal programmes.