

CONSUMER PRICES RISE

The Consumer Price Index for Canada (1961=100) rose 0.4 per cent to 141.8 in September from 141.3 in August. This increase contrasts with declines of 0.2 per cent between these two months in each of the preceding three years. Advances of 0.7 per cent and 0.8 per cent in the food and clothing indexes, respectively, were mainly responsible for this increase although the housing component rose 0.2 per cent and transportation edged up 0.1 per cent. On the other hand, the recreation-and-reading index dropped 0.2 per cent and the health-and-personal care and the tobacco-and-alcohol components remained unchanged. From September 1971 to September 1972, the all-items index advanced 5.3 per cent, the largest advance for any 12-month period in recent years.

FOOD

In the 12 months to September 1972, the food index rose 9.7 per cent, the largest advance for any 12 months since well before 1961. During the past year, the price of food consumed at home rose 10.2 per cent and that for restaurant meals 7.3 per cent.

HOUSING

The housing index rose 0.2 per cent to 144.1 in September from 143.8 in August as a result of increases of 0.2 per cent in both the shelter and household-operation components. In the 12 months to September 1972, the housing index advanced 4.6 per cent.

CLOTHING

The clothing index, which usually rises in September, advanced 0.8 per cent to 132.4 from its level of 131.3 in August. Footwear prices increased 2.0 per cent in the latest month, with higher quotations for all items surveyed; in the 12 months since September 1971, footwear prices have advanced 5.1 per cent. From September 1971 to September 1972, the clothing index rose 2.2 per cent, the smallest 12-month increase of the seven major components of the all-items index.

From September 1971 to September 1972, the index for services rose 5.4 per cent, while that for total commodities increased 5.2 per cent.

CLC OPPOSES SHORT WORK WEEK

The Canadian Labour Congress has expressed strong opposition to the introduction of any scheme that would shorten the work week at the expense of longer work days, and warned that any such amendment to the Labour (Standards) Code may have serious repercussions particularly for the unorganized work force in Canada.

In a brief recently submitted to the Commission of Inquiry into the modified or "compressed" work week, the CLC, which represents almost two million organized workers across Canada, urged the Com-

mission to "reject any move to accommodate the compressed work week".

The only manner in which the shorter work week can safely come into being is through the maintenance of an eight-hour day or less," the brief stated.

The Congress stressed that it was not so much concerned with the danger of seeing longer work days imposed upon the organized workers it represents but rather with the thousands of unorganized workers across the country who were "prone to manipulation if the labour standards are relaxed".

"For these reasons it is a major concern of organized labour that the unorganized sectors of the working community be protected from those employers who may be attracted to exploit their employees through the loosening of the federal labour standards" the Congress stated.

A BACKWARD STEP

The brief warned that lengthening of the work day may lead to increased fatigue, which in turn would provoke carelessness and industrial accidents. Moreover, it claimed it was a reversal of the historical trend toward shorter work days, and a backward step that would "take Canada back into the nineteenth century".

The Congress rejected the claim that a compressed week would afford workers more leisure time. "The optimum answer to a cry for more leisure time can only be found...in longer vacations, earlier retirements, increased sabbaticals and a shorter work-day and work-week in combination," the brief stated.

According to the CLC, the shorter effect on unemployment would not result in the creation of a single new job. In addition, the brief stated, it would reduce the workers' take-home pay and encourage "moonlighting".

ECOSOC MEMBERSHIP TO DOUBLE?

Canada has ratified the amendment to Article 61 of the Charter of the United Nations by which the membership of the Economic and Social Council would be doubled in size from 27 to a total of 54.

Canada has actively supported enlargement to make the Council, which is the major organ of the United Nations concerned with economic and social questions, more representative of the UN membership as a whole. Enlargement will also make the Council more effective in carrying out its functions under the UN Charter. Although the enlargement of the Council itself will take place only after ratification of the Charter amendment by two-thirds of the members of the UN (including the five permanent members of the Security Council), the sessional committees have already been expanded in accordance with the amendment's intent, giving additional members the right to participate in the Council's work, without the right to vote.