

Area Development Agency. The luncheon at which he will speak will be followed by informal sessions during which a panel of senior Industry Department officials will answer and discuss a series of key questions now being prepared in consultation with business, labour, industry and professional groups on the Windsor area. They will then go on to answer and discuss other questions from the audience. These questions will cover details of the Government's tax-incentive programme designed to stimulate the establishment of new manufacturing and processing businesses in certain designated regions of slow economic growth and chronic unemployment.

PRICE MOVEMENTS

Canada's consumer price index (1949=100) increased 0.2 per cent, to 134.5 from 134.2, during January and February 1964. The February index was 1.8 per cent above the February 1963 index of 132.1. In the current period, most of the increase resulted from a 1.1 per cent rise in the transportation index, but the indexes for recreation and reading, tobacco and alcohol, and clothing were also higher. The housing and the health-and-personal-care indexes were unchanged, while the food index declined slightly.

The food index eased down 0.1 per cent, to 131.3 in February from 131.4 in January. Prices were higher for a number of foods including milk, flour, bread and other bakery products, coffee, most fresh fruits and vegetables, and a few meats. Outweighing these increases were substantially lower prices for sugar, which declined for the third consecutive month, eggs, most cuts of beef and pork, and fats.

The housing index remained unchanged at 137.3; a slight increase in the shelter component was not sufficient to move it. In shelter, rent was unchanged but the home-ownership index increased. In the household-operation component, lower prices for furniture and floor coverings balanced increases for textiles and some household supplies and services.

The clothing index increased 0.1 per cent, to 117.8 from 117.7, as price increases for some items of women's clothing outweighed sale-price reductions for men's suits and coats. Indexes for children's wear, footwear and clothing services were unchanged.

The transportation index advanced 1.1 per cent, to 142.6 from 141.1, as a result of a sharp increase in insurance rates in the automobile-operation component.

The health-and-personal-care index remained at 165.4, with both the health-care and personal-care components unchanged. Lower prices for some pharmaceuticals were not sufficient to move the health-care index and in personal care price changes were moderate and offsetting.

The recreation-and-reading index moved up 0.1 per cent, to 152.3 from 152.1, as both the recreation and reading components increased fractionally. In recreation, prices were higher for camera film and

bicycles, while price increases for newspapers in Saint John, New Brunswick, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, moved the reading index.

The tobacco-and-alcohol index advanced 0.8 per cent, to 119.4 from 118.5, as both the tobacco and the alcoholic-beverages components moved higher. Scattered increases in the price of cigarettes and cigarette tobacco occurred in several cities, and liquor prices increased in Ontario, Quebec and some Atlantic provinces.

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

The ministers and deputy ministers of labour of all ten Canadian provinces attended a conference in Ottawa on March 9 and 10. This conclave was the first of its kind since 1946. In that year, the federal and provincial ministers were concerned with legislation on industrial relations in the post-war period. The conference just finished discussed a broader list of subjects, reflecting the increased responsibilities of departments of labour today.

The conference agenda included apprenticeship and training in industry, labour standards, and the Manpower Consultative Service now being set up in the federal Labour Department to help management and labour find ways of maintaining employment security in the face of technological change.

During its second day, the conference discussed labour-management co-operation, the ratification of International Labour Organization conventions, and emergency manpower planning.

NEW HOME BUILDING

Starts on the construction of new dwellings in all areas of Canada (urban, rural non-farm, and farm) increased sharply (38.5 per cent) in the fourth quarter of 1963, to 46,904 units from 33,854 in the corresponding 1962 period, bringing the total for the year to 148,624 units, compared to 130,095 in the preceding year, an increase of 14.2 per cent. Completions in these areas were down 5.3 per cent in the quarter, to 37,606 units from 39,700 a year earlier, but up 1.2 per cent in the full year, to 128,191 units from 126,682. Units in various stages of construction at December 31, 1963, numbered 96,613, a substantial increase (26.9 per cent) over 1962's year-end total of 76,153 units.

Starts on new dwellings in urban centres of 5,000 population and over more than doubled in December 1963, rising to 15,878 units from 7,566 in December 1962. This brought the total in the year to 120,950 units compared to 104,279 the year before, an increase of 16.0 per cent. Completions in these centres rose 8.6 per cent in the month, to 8,925 units from 8,220 a year earlier, and 1.1 per cent in the year, to 101,528 units from 100,447 in 1962. The number of units under construction at December 31, 1963, in these centres increased 30.9 per cent, to 79,233 from 60,541 at the end of 1962.
