

United Nations and elsewhere, in reducing the danger of a nuclear holocaust and promoting global disarmament." The press release said that public sessions had been planned to take place from October 14 to November 14 in at least twenty Canadian cities by teams of three MPs, one from each political party.

United Church Arms Resolution

The United Church of Canada passed an anti-nuclear arms resolution in August at a Montreal council session. The Church resolved "to call on the Canadian Government to stop the production of nuclear weapons or components in Canada; to stop the transport of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons across Canadian territory and not allow storage or testing of such weapons in Canada; and to declare Canada a nuclear-weapon-free-zone."

TRADE/ECONOMIC

FIRA Changes

On August 23 the federal government, as promised in the June 28 budget, announced new measures to "clarify the application of the Foreign Investment Review Act and to streamline the internal decision-making procedures and processes involved in its administration." Industry, Trade and Commerce Minister Herb Gray said that the initiatives "show that we want to make Canada's policy on foreign investment and its administration as clear and as efficient as possible without straying from the objectives set by Parliament or the commitments made by the Government" (FIRA press release, August 23).

The three measures announced provided for the issuance of interpretation notes covering provisions and expressions of a legal nature used in the act, some of which "experience has shown to be particularly difficult to interpret"; the authorization of the Agency to provide formal opinions to foreign investors on whether they are subject to review under the act; and the introduction of special short application forms for companies eligible to apply for review under the small-business procedure.

At a conference of provincial premiers during the same week, Newfoundland Premier Brian Peckford and B.C. Premier William Bennett demanded the elimination of FIRA, arguing that any foreign money coming to Canada in these difficult economic times should be welcomed. Other premiers had objected to what they claimed was the arbitrary and secretive way the agency operated (*The Citizen*, August 30).

The principle of FIRA was defended by Energy Minister Marc Lalonde at a seminar sponsored by the federal government during the International Monetary Fund conference in Toronto in early September. He said that compared with other countries, Canada's economic nationalism was a "tame animal . . . all too often trotted out by the media as a major cause of Canadian economic ailments."

FIRA had been "the object of mounting criticism in the last few months" (*The Citizen*, August 30), from both inside and outside the country. MP Douglas Fisher, Parliamentary

Secretary to the Minister of Finance, told a Canadian Chamber of Commerce meeting September 21 that the criticisms had been overblown and had created "an emotional smokescreen" that obscured the sound work done by the agency. (See this issue, BILATERAL-US.)

Directory of Canadian Trading Houses

The availability of a Directory of Canadian Trading Houses, compiled by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce was announced August 18. An External Affairs press release that day said: "The directory profiles more than 640 trading houses operating in Canada, their products, methods of operation and markets served . . . Trading Houses are particularly suited for use by small and medium-sized manufacturers who cannot sustain the high initial set-up cost of starting an export division or whose potential sales can not warrant the establishment of such a full-time function."

Dollar

The Canadian dollar was worth 79.96 cents (US) on August 2, and rose briefly above the 81-cent (US) level during August. It rose and fell slightly during September, reaching its highest level since early May on September 22, at 81.55 cents. At the end of September, the dollar registered 80.90 cents (US) (*Globe and Mail*, August, September and October).

Trade Surplus

Figures released by Statistics Canada in August and September revealed that Canada's trade surplus was a record \$2.01 billion (revised) in June and \$1.56 billion in July. In July, the surplus declined because imports rose 10.1% while exports increased only 1.2%. It was reported that if large trade surpluses continue this year, the surplus for 1982 would be \$16.8 billion, almost twice the record surplus of \$8.5 billion in 1980 (*Globe and Mail*, September 4).

Quebec Trade Department

Quebec Premier René Lévesque announced September 9 changes which structurally altered the Quebec cabinet. One new department created was External Commerce, with Bernard Landry, former Minister of Economic Development, as minister. The new department will deal with both interprovincial and foreign commerce (*Globe and Mail*, September 10).

AID

Disaster Relief

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) provided \$50,000 and \$80,000 in funds to El Salvador and Nicaragua during August. The relief was to finance medical supplies and equipment following a June 19 earthquake in El Salvador, and in Nicaragua, to aid in the purchase of milk, foodstuffs and shelter after floods in May (CIDA press releases, August 20 and 31).