

*Hides and Leather.*—Increases in prices of hides and leather are felt to have resulted from the influence of world market and United States prices, increases in wages and the increased costs of tanning materials. On the removal of controls, prices rose to meet United States prices and thereafter remained steady.

*Leather Footwear.*—"The rise in the price of shoes reflected the rise in the price of leather." Shoe retailers have a fixed mark-up of about 33½ p.c. On the whole the manufacture of leather footwear was regarded by the Commission as very competitive.

*Lumber.*—The Commission found "little evidence to indicate widespread attempts . . . to raise or maintain prices by agreement . . . (or) of price leadership". Unprecedented demand and increased wages trebled the price of lumber in the years 1939-47. Canadian prices, though higher after decontrol, were still below the export price level. There was some evidence that "grading procedure, particularly in Eastern Canada, did not always seem to give sufficient protection to consumers" and a uniform system of grading was recommended.

**Consumer Credit.**—The increased demand for consumer credit was found to have been brought about by a desire for a higher standard of living, increased production, and an increase in the number and size of credit institutions. The Report states, however, that the consumer is seldom aware of what he actually pays for credit, rates quoted in many cases being discount rates on debts to be amortized by equal monthly payments. It was the opinion of the Commission that "if finance charges were stated as annual effective rates rather than as discount rates in loan contracts and literature, the consumer would be able to choose the credit most advantageous to him . . . . Lack of adequate and accurate statistics is one of the major obstacles to a knowledge of Consumer Credit" and it was recommended that the Dominion Bureau of Statistics "broaden and refine its statistics" relative to this indicator.

**Statistics.**—In addition the Commission recommended that the Dominion Bureau of Statistics explore the possibilities of improving the cost-of-living index. A continuing program of consumer expenditure surveys on a sample basis was suggested and, among other things, it was pointed out that "the present system of reckoning shelter costs gives an inadequate picture of true costs". Among other recommendations, a statistical study of productivity was urged and the publication of "an analysis of the way in which the consumer's dollar is divided among the various productive and distributive processes".

**Other Recommendations.**—It was recommended that the Dominion Companies' Act be revised to obtain "uniformity in the quality and quantity of information given in financial statements". More information on inventories, reserves and profits is required and the Federal Government was urged to obtain the co-operation of the Provincial Governments in developing uniform financial reporting under the Act.

Public accounts, the Commission thought, should be published so that the man in the street can understand the effect of government transactions.

The Combines Investigation Commission was urged to devise means to deal with the fixing of resale prices by manufacturers.

In conclusion, the Commission recorded its view that import controls should not be used as a protectionist device.