Friday, January 10, 1997

OVERVIEW

♦ Economy grows at a good pace

Economic activity grew at a good pace in October. Gross domestic product rose 0.3%, despite a long strike in the motor vehicle industry.

Provincial trade flows shift to foreign markets

Trade between Canada's provinces and territories rose only 6.6% between 1990 and 1995, as industrial producers across the country shifted dramatically to foreign markets.

Quebec and Ontario behind employment gain

Following three consecutive months of declines, businesses recouped employment in October. The gain was concentrated in most industries in Quebec and among retailers in Ontario.

◆ Foreigners invest large amounts in Canadian securities

Foreigners invested a significant \$6.0 billion in Canadian securities in October, their largest investment in a year and a half.

Auto and food retailers lead sales increase

Consumer spending, primarily in the automotive and food sectors, increased in October.

♦ Wholesalers enjoy record sales

Wholesalers set new sales records in October, while inventories remained fairly stable.

Economy grows at a good pace

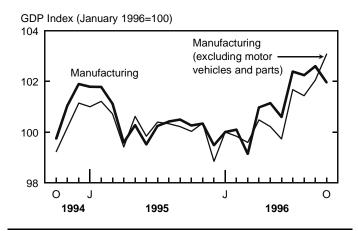
conomic activity grew at a good pace in October. Gross domestic product at factor cost (GDP) rose 0.3%, despite a long strike in the motor vehicle industry. Excluding motor vehicles and parts, GDP advanced 0.6%, led by the rest of manufacturing, wholesale trade, finance and related services, and the mining sector. Retail trade and community, business and personal services also recorded sizeable gains. Output of utilities continued to firm up, while lower activity in forestry moderated growth.

Manufacturing production fell 0.6% in October, although output increased in 16 of 21 major groups. Excluding motor vehicles and parts, output in manufacturing rose 1.0%. Manufacturers of chemicals, paper and allied products, and producers of primary metals and metal goods contributed most to that gain. Fabrication of electrical and electronic equipment edged ahead for a second consecutive month.

Wholesaling activity rose 1.9%, with sales increasing at a fast pace in most trade groups. Sales of computers and software packages, motor vehicles and parts, and construction materials led the advance. After reducing inventories in the first half of 1996, wholesalers recently started accumulating stocks. However, as a proportion of sales, inventories have declined all year long.

Following a long period of lacklustre consumer spending, retailing activity advanced 0.6% in October, its fourth gain in five (continued on page 2)

GM strike offset gains in the rest of manufacturing



... Economy grows at a good pace

months. Sales in supermarkets and by motor vehicle dealers led the increase. Operators of service stations and retailers of clothing also had a good month. However, spending eased on furniture and appliances as well as on semi-durable goods, such as books, tools and toys.

Growth in the mining sector resumed after being interrupted in September by declines in drilling activity and in the production of crude oil and natural gas. Drilling activity rebounded in October and, despite earlier fluctuations, has remained well above its 1995 level. A substantial increase in the price of crude oil since late 1995 and a rebound in its production were dominant factors in the growth of this industry in 1996.

Output of utilities rose 1.2%, about equal to its pace in September. Producers of electricity led the advance, but gas distribution also gained momentum.

Financial and related services increased 0.6% in October, after remaining at almost the same level between July and September. Activities related to stock markets surged and, along with strength in the real estate market, accounted for most of the advance.

Activity by mutual funds continued to trend up. After stabilizing between May and July, assets of mutual funds have grown rapidly since July. Sales were particularly sizeable in October.

Note to readers

GDP of an industry is the value added by labour and capital in transforming inputs purchased from other industries into output. Monthly GDP by industry is valued at 1986 prices. The estimates presented here are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

Real estate activity has firmed up since the beginning of the year, spurred by falling mortgage rates. Recent drops in rates brought housing resales to a level not seen since 1989. In the case of new housing, dwelling starts tumbled in October and residential construction remained almost at the same level for a third consecutive month.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4671-4674.

The October 1996 issue of **Gross domestic product by industry** (15-001-XPB, \$14/\$140) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Michel Girard (613-951-9145), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)

Provincial trade flows shift to foreign markets

rade between Canada's provinces and territories rose only 6.6% between 1990 and 1995 to \$150 billion, as industrial producers across the country shifted dramatically to foreign markets. Low levels of spending by consumers, firms and governments held back internal trade, which fell slightly during 1992's weak economy, then rebounded the following year and expanded a strong 9.7% in 1994.

The little expansion which did occur in interprovincial trade resulted entirely from a 21% increase in services, compared with a 3% drop in goods. Meanwhile, industrial producers focused more and more on foreign markets during the five-year period. Nationwide, exports in 1995 were up 69% above their 1990 levels, while imports rose nearly 55%.

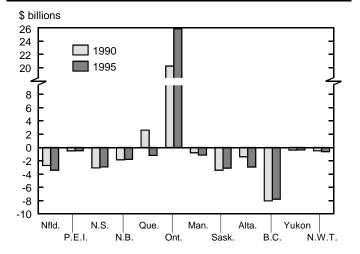
Shifts in trade flows from provincial to foreign markets were most prominent in Quebec and Alberta. In 1994 and 1995, Quebec recorded a deficit of over \$1 billion in trade with other provinces, after registering surpluses of about \$2 billion earlier in the decade. On the other hand, Quebec registered a \$3.8 billion surplus in international trade in 1995. Its exports rose 78% between 1990 and 1995, and its imports expanded as well, but at a rate below the national average.

Alberta's trade deficit with other provinces grew substantially during this five-year period. However, this was more than offset by a foreign trade surplus that reached \$10.6 billion in 1995.

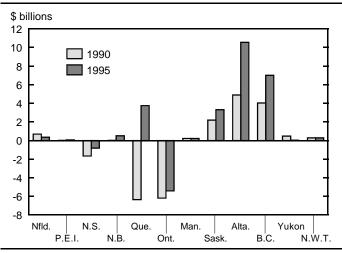
Ontario—the only province to record an interprovincial surplus in 1995—strengthened its trade dominance with a 28% increase from 1990, to \$25.9 billion in 1995. Ontario increased its internal trade position with every region in Canada, especially Quebec. On the other hand, Ontario's international trade deficit has remained relatively stable since 1990.

(continued on page 3)

Interprovincial trade balance



International trade balance



... Provincial trade flows shift to foreign markets

All provinces posted significant gains in interprovincial trade in services, ranging from 10% in Quebec to 34% in British Columbia. The strength in services trading was led by wholesale trade, business, communications and financial services. Interprovincial trade of goods, however, fell below 1990 levels in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and the territories. The weakness was widespread among most manufactured goods.

Over the five-year period, Ontario's trade surplus with Quebec rose from a modest \$2.4 billion in 1990 to \$5.8 billion in 1995. The shift occurred mainly in goods, where Quebec recorded a trade surplus with Ontario until 1993. This turned into a deficit of \$1.1 billion in 1994 and a deficit of more than \$800 million in 1995.

Newfoundland's interprovincial trade deficit increased during the five-year period, largely the result of higher imports of goods and services associated with off-shore oil development, particularly from Alberta. At the same time, Newfoundland exported fewer fish

Note to readers

These statistics are preliminary projections of the 1990 interprovincial and international trade flows. The data will be revised as additional survey information becomes available and provincial trade flows are integrated in the System of National/Provincial Accounts. The first set of revisions is scheduled for May 1997.

and fish products following the July 1992 moratorium on the northern cod fishery. Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan were the only provinces to show an increase in interprovincial exports every year between 1990 and 1995.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4201-4245 and 4250-4255.

For further information, contact Ronald Rioux (613-951-3697), Hans Messinger (613-951-2937) or Norm Ellis (613-951-3677), Input-Output Division (fax: 613-951-0489).

Quebec and Ontario behind employment gain

Pollowing three months of consecutive declines, businesses recouped employment in October adding 29,000 employees to their payrolls. While this offset some of the previous declines, the number of employees is down nearly 100,000 since January 1996. The gain in October was concentrated in most industries in Quebec, as well among retailers in Ontario. The number of employees in other provinces was little changed.

Employees' average weekly earnings rose by 1.0% in October to \$592.64. Employees in manufacturing, finance, insurance and real estate benefited the most from the increase. This growth followed five months of no significant change in the level of weekly earnings, which are now 3.0% higher than in October 1995. The growth in earnings between September and October was related to increased hours worked by hourly paid employees.

After reaching a peak in January, the number of employees in retail trade followed a downward trend until July. The number of workers in this sector remained stable in August and September, but expanded by 11,000 in October. Employment gains were

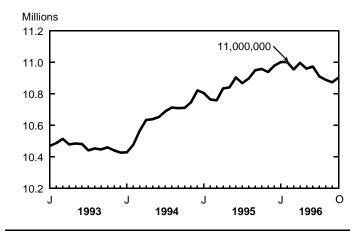
Average weekly earnings, October 1996 Seasonally adjusted

	Industrial aggregate \$	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	592.64	1.0	3.0
Newfoundland Prince Edward Island Nova Scotia New Brunswick Quebec Ontario Manitoba Saskatchewan Alberta British Columbia	522.95 500.17 502.27 515.33 564.50 630.77 519.21 517.98 595.75 610.33	-1.0 -0.2 2.0 0.5 1.2 0.6 1.9 1.1 1.6	-2.9 3.6 3.2 1.4 2.3 3.2 1.9 4.5 7.6
Yukon Northwest Territories	722.84 719.83	1.8 0.1	0.4 0.8

Note to readers

The target population of the Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours is all employers, except those in agriculture, fishing and trapping, private household services, religious organizations and defence services. The survey defines an employee as any person drawing pay for services rendered or for paid absences and for whom the employer must complete a Revenue Canada T-4 Supplementary Form.

Employment



concentrated in Ontario, among general retail merchandisers and retail food stores. The growth coincides with an increase in retail sales. Weekly earnings for retail employees rose 1.0% and the average number of hours worked by hourly paid employees was up 1.3%.

In construction, employment rebounded by 5,000 in October. The increase was concentrated in Quebec among trade contracting companies, and coincided with a rebound in the value of building permits requested. Weekly earnings for construction employees rose by a sharp \$10.24 per week, due mainly to a substantial increase in hours worked by employees paid by the hour. Since

(continued on page 4)

... Quebec and Ontario behind employment gain

the start of the year, the average number of hours worked per week has followed an upward trend.

A slight employment decline, resulting from the GM strike, was registered by manufacturers in October, with automotive parts and accessories manufacturers in Ontario accounting for most of the drop. Weekly earnings for manufacturing employees rose significantly, due to a rise in the number of hours worked by employees paid by the hour. On average, employees earned \$725.27, a 3.6% increase from October 1995.

The number of employees working in food and beverage services grew by 7,000, following recent monthly fluctuations.

October's increase was concentrated in Ontario, and to a lesser extent in Quebec and Alberta. Declines were recorded in British Columbia.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4285-4466, 9438-9452, 9639-9664 and 9899-9911.

Detailed industry data and other labour market indicators are available in standard tables in the monthly publication **Employment, earnings and hours** (72-002-XPB, \$31/\$310), the historical publication**Annual estimates of employment, earnings and hours, 1983-1995** (diskette: 72F0002XDE, \$120) and by custom tabulation. For further information, contact Stephen Johnson (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; Internet: labour@statcan.ca), Labour Division.

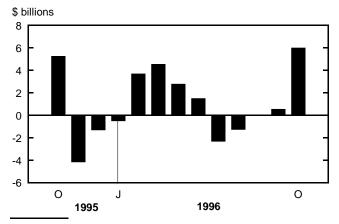
Foreigners invest large amounts in Canadian securities

Poreigners invested a significant \$6.0 billion in Canadian securities in October, their largest investment in a year and a half. The buying, which was concentrated in bonds and money market paper, followed four months of selling which totalled some \$3 billion. Meanwhile, Canadian investors continued to invest significantly in foreign stocks, purchasing a further \$1.6 billion in October.

In the Canadian debt market, foreigners purchased \$5.3 billion of bonds and money market paper, over 90% of which were issued by the Government of Canada. The foreign investment included a record \$4 billion injected into outstanding federal bonds. The October investment occurred despite declining interest rates in Canada and a widening differential with rates favouring investment in the United States. Trading with non-residents continued to be very heavy in both Canadian bonds and money market paper, reaching \$216 billion, up 12% from the record of the previous month.

After two months of small disinvestments, foreigners resumed their investment in Canadian stocks, acquiring \$0.7 billion in October. This brought their January to October investment to \$6.9 billion, contrasting with the \$4.2 billion disinvestment for all of 1995. October's foreign investment was in newly issued shares, with a large part resulting from a takeover in the financial sector. Although the foreign investment in existing shares was flat, foreign trading in outstanding Canadian stocks (sales and purchases) jumped 21% to \$12.8 billion, matching the record of May 1996. Canadian stock prices (as measured by the TSE 300 index) rose 5.8% in October, following a 7.3% increase over the previous two months.

Foreign investment in Canadian securities*



* Includes bonds, stocks and money market paper.

Canadian purchases of foreign stocks continued in October with an investment of \$1.6 billion. For the second straight month, slightly more than half of this investment was directed to U.S. stocks. This was a shift from the pattern of recent years, which saw the majority go to overseas stocks. The gross value of trade in outstanding foreign stocks (buys and sells with non-residents) rose 18% to a record \$15.7 billion in October.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2330.

The October 1996 issue of Canada's international transactions in securities (67-002-XPB, \$17/\$170) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Don Granger (613-951-1864), Balance of Payments Division.

Auto and food retailers lead sales increase

s consumers loosened their purse strings in October, retail sales increased 1.1% to \$18.2 billion, primarily due to greater spending in the automotive and food sectors. Despite the gains in October and September, retail sales for the first 10 months of 1996 were only 1.6% higher than in the same period of 1995. With the effect of price increases removed, retail sales were unchanged. The slow growth of 1996 follows the fluctuations of 1995 and contrasts with the rapid growth of 1994.

Retailers recorded higher sales in five of the seven sectors, accounting for 84% of total sales. Increasing the most in dollar terms were automotive retailers (+1.8%) and food stores (+1.9%). The furniture retailers (-1.1%) and other retail stores (-1.7%) were the two sectors that lost ground.

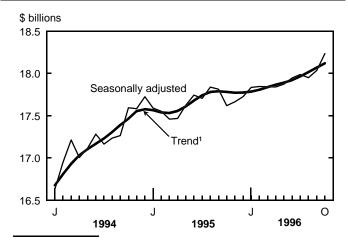
For the automotive sector, October's gain was the third straight monthly rise, led by motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers. The number of new motor vehicles sold rose 3.7%. As the price war between Atlantic and Central Canada ended, gasoline service stations also contributed to the overall gain with a 3.6% advance. Sales in the automotive sector have generally grown in recent months, after pausing during the summer.

The food retailers' advance in October was their fourth gain in five months and coincided with a larger-than-normal increase in food prices, especially fresh vegetables, fresh fruit and beef. Sales of food retailers have generally increased since June 1996.

After two straight monthly declines, sales in the general merchandise sector bounced back in October (+1.1%). This amounts to 7 gains in 10 months. Sales by department stores grew 0.7%, the sixth consecutive monthly gain. Also, sales by other general stores increased (+1.6%), but not by enough to offset drops in August and September. The general merchandise sector has seen mostly steady growth since mid-1993.

Consumers reduced their spending in furniture stores after three months of gains. Despite this drop, sales by furniture stores have generally increased since April 1996.

Retail sales



¹ Trend represents smoothed seasonally adjusted data.

Sales by drug stores were virtually unchanged (+0.1%) after a 0.8% rise in September, but these two recent advances did not compensate for the large decline in August. Sales by drug stores grew from July 1995 to May 1996, but have declined since then.

For the first 10 months of 1996, sales by retailers east of Ontario (except Newfoundland) and in the Prairies grew faster than the national level. In contrast, retailers in Newfoundland and Ontario saw a drop in their sales for the first 10 months of 1996, compared with the same period in 1995. Retailers in British Columbia recorded growth below the national average.

As for the following month, employment in trade increased 0.7% in November and there was a rise in the number of vehicles sold. Retail sales in the United States were down 0.4% in November, following a 0.3% increase in October.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2299, 2398-2417 and 2420.

The October 1996 issue of **Retail trade** (63-005-XPB, \$20/\$200) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Louise Généreux (613-951-3549). For analytical information, contact Pierre Desjardins (613-951-9682), Industry Division.

Wholesalers enjoy record sales

holesalers set new sales records in October, while inventories remained fairly stable. Sales reached \$21.9 billion, up 1.7% from the month before. Nine of the 11 trade groups advanced, accounting for approximately 82% of total sales. Food products and computers, packaged software and electronic equipment led the gain in dollar terms; these two groups alone represented approximately 66% of October's increase. The only groups that declined were farm machinery, equipment and supplies, and other products.

For the first 10 months of 1996, sales by wholesalers exceeded those for the same period of 1995 by roughly 3%.

Food product wholesalers posted a surprisingly strong 4.3% advance in October. This appears to be due partly to higher-than-normal food price increases for this time of year. According to the consumer price index, food prices rose 0.6% from September, led by fresh vegetables, fruits, baked goods, dairy products and beef.

Retail and wholesale trade, October 1996 Seasonally adjusted

	Retail sales		Wholesale sales	
	\$ millions %	change, previous month	\$ millions 9	% change, previous month
Canada	18,203	1.1	21,941	1.7
Newfoundland	285	4.1	185	-0.8
Prince Edward Island	81	2.2	49	9.4
Nova Scotia	573	4.0	499	4.9
New Brunswick	453	1.2	312	1.2
Quebec	4,462	2.4	4,777	4.1
Ontario	6,436	-1.2	9,536	0.2
Manitoba	673	1.5	820	3.0
Saskatchewan	599	1.3	702	0.7
Alberta	1,974	2.2	2,155	1.7
British Columbia	2,602	2.7	2,883	2.5
Yukon	24	4.6	11	-5.6
Northwest Territories	40	0.2	12	-6.3

(continued on page 6)

... Wholesalers enjoy record sales

The growing range of non-food products offered by supermarkets may also be influencing sales in the food products group.

For the third consecutive month, wholesalers of computers, packaged software and other electronic equipment raised their sales notably (+3.9%), following increases of 8.1% in August and 3.3% in September. The sales of this group have been rising since mid-1995. Their products are in good part destined to the home and industrial markets. In 1996, 3.6 million households owned a personal computer, an increase of 365,000 households over 1995, and three times as many as 10 years before. The growing popularity

of cellular telephones is also having a positive impact on sales by this trade group.

Wholesalers' inventories were almost unchanged (+0.1%) at \$31.6 billion, although 4 of the 11 trade groups registered a drop in their stocks. The inventories-to-sales ratio declined to 1.44.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 59, 61, 648 and 649.

The October 1996 issue of **Retail trade** (63-008-XPB, \$18/\$180) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Catherine Mamay (613-951-9683) or Sylvie Ouellette (613-951-3552), Industry Division.

New from Statistics Canada



Travel-log

Winter 1997

The Winter 1997 issue of *Travel-log*, Statistics Canada's quarterly tourism newsletter, features the article "National tourism indicators: A new tool for analysing tourism in Canada". The national tourism indicators (NTIs) are a new set of data that were first published in late June 1996. The NTIs estimate the following components of the Tourism Satellite Account for each quarter: domestic supply of tourism commodities, demand by Canadian and non-resident visitors to Canada for these Canadian-produced tourism commodities, and tourism industry employment generated by tourism.

Each quarter, *Travel-log* examines the Travel Price Index and features the latest travel indicators. In addition, starting with this issue, *Travel-log* will feature a summary page on tourism indicators for the tourism demand in Canada and the employment generated by tourism.

The Winter 1997 (vol. 16, no.1) issue of **Travel-log** (87-003-XPB, \$12/\$40) is now available. For further information, contact Monique Beyrouti (613-951-1673; fax: 613-951-2909; Internet: beyrmon@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

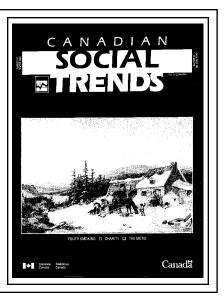
Canadian social trends

Winter 1996

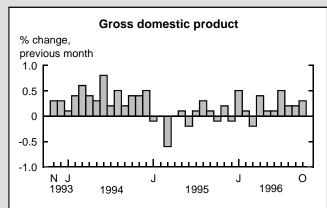
The Winter 1996 issue of *Canadian social trends* features the articles "Youth smoking in Canada", "Who gives to charity?", "Working arrangements and time stress", "Language and culture of the Métis people", "Adult literacy in Canada, the United States and Germany".

Each quarter, *Canadian social trends* integrates data from many sources to examine emerging social trends and issues. It also features the latest social indicators, as well as information about Statistics Canada's products and services.

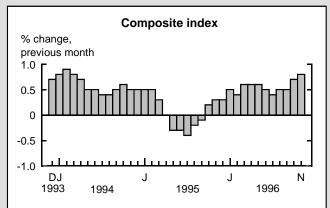
The Winter 1996 issue of Canadian social trends (11-008-XPE, \$10/\$34) is now available. For further information, contact Warren Clark (613-951-2556), Housing, Family and Social Division.



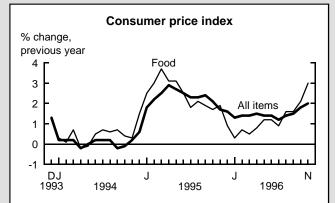
Current trends



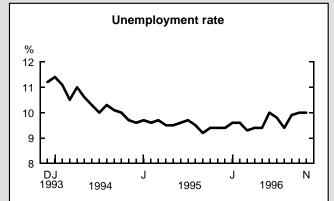
Real gross domestic product at factor cost increased 0.3% between September and October.



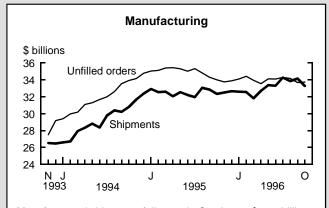
The composite index grew by 0.8% in November.



Consumers paid 2.0% more for goods and services in November 1996 than the year before. Food prices rose by 3.0%.



In November, the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 10.0%.



Manufacturers' shipments fell 2.6% in October to \$33.2 billion. The level of unfilled orders rose 0.2% to \$33.7 billion.



In October, the value of merchandise exports fell 10.4% from September to \$21.1 billion. Imports dropped 3.3% to \$19.6 billion.

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted except the consumer price index.

Latest monthly statistics					
	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year	
GENERAL		•			
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1986)	October*	555.4	0.3%	2.4%	
Composite index (1981=100)	November	183.2	0.8%	6.4%	
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q3 1996	24.4	7.5%	3.8%	
Capacity utilization (%)	Q3 1996	83.8	1.3†	0.8†	
DOMESTIC DEMAND					
Retail trade (\$ billion)	October*	18.2	1.1%	3.5%	
New motor vehicle sales ('000 units)	October	104.1	3.7%	7.7%	
LABOUR					
Employment (millions)	November	13.7	0.1%	1.5%	
Unemployment rate (%)	November	10.0	0.0^{+}	0.6†	
Participation rate (%)	November	65.0	0.0†	0.5†	
Labour income (\$ billion)	September	35.9	0.3%	2.1%	
Average weekly earnings (\$)	October*	592.64	-1.0%	3.0%	
INTERNATIONAL TRADE					
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	October	21.1	-10.4%	-1.2%	
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	October	19.6	-3.3%	6.1%	
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	October	1.5	-1.8	-1.4	
MANUFACTURING					
Shipments (\$ billion)	October	33.2	-2.6%	2.9%	
New orders (\$ billion)	October	33.3	-1.1%	4.0%	
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	October	33.7	0.2%	-0.8%	
Inventory/shipments ratio	October	1.36	0.05	-0.05	
PRICES					
Consumer price index (1986=100)	November	136.8	0.4%	2.0%	
Industrial product price index (1986=100)	November*	129.0	-0.2%	-0.5%	
Raw materials price index (1986=100)	November*	137.3	-2.4%	9.5%	
New housing price index (1986=100)	October	131.4	-0.1%	-1.6%	

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.

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^{*} new this week

[†] percentage point

Publications released from January 3 to 9, 1997					
			Pr	iption	
Division/title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Canada (Cdn.\$)	United States	Other countries
					US\$
CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE					
FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS	Winter 1997	87-003-XPB	12/40	15/48	17/56
Travel-log	Willer 1997	87-003-APD	12/40	13/46	17/30
HOUSING, FAMILY AND SOCIAL STATISTIC	es				
Canadian social trends	Winter 1996	11-008-XPE	10/34	13/41	15/48
INDUSTRY					
Asphalt roofing	November 1996	45-001-XPB	6/60	8/72	9/84
Beverage and tobacco products industries	1994	32-251-XPB	38	46	54
Cement	November 1996	44-001-XPB	6/60	8/72	9/84
Coal and coke statistics	October 1996	45-002-XPB	11/110	14/132	16/154
Electric power statistics	October 1996	57-001-XPB	11/110	14/132	16/154
Electrical and electronic products industries	1994	43-250-XPB	38	46	54
Energy statistics handbook					
Paper version	December 1996	57-601-UPB	375	450	525
Electronic version	December 1996	57-601-XDE	275	330	385
Gas utilities	September 1996	55-002-XPB	16/160	20/200	23/230
Leather and allied products industries	1994	33-251-XPB	38	46	54
New motor vehicle sales	October 1996	63-007-XPB	16/160	20/192	23/224
Non-metallic mineral products industries	1994	44-250-XPB	38	46	54
Production and disposition of tobacco products	November 1996	32-002-XPB	6/60	8/72	9/84
Sawmills and planing mills	October 1996	35-003-XPB	11/110	14/132	16/154
Transportation equipment industries	1994	42-251-XPB	38	46	54
Wholesale trade	October 1996	63-008-XPB	18/180	22/216	26/252
LABOUR					
Quarterly estimates of trusteed pension funds	Q2 1996	74-001-XPB	18/60	22/72	26/84
TRANSPORTATION					
Aviation service bulletin	Vol. 28, no. 12	51-004-XPB	11/105	13/126	15/147

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