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Living Cost Rose 13.9% During 1973

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Guam's cost of living climbed another 4.7 per cent the last three months of 1973, making it 13.9 per cent higher than a year before.

The island's cost of living index is prepared quarterly by the Economic Research Center of the local Commerce Department, using the first quarter of the 1973 fiscal year—July through September 1972—as a base of 100.

The latest index covers October through December 1973 and adds up to an even smaller dollar for the Guam consumer. The 1972 dollar that had shrunk to 90 cents worth of buying power by last August was down another 4 cents—to 86 cents—by the end of the year.

Food again led the inflation spiral, followed by transportation, housing, health, recreation and apparel and upkeep expenses.

In November it took \$128.67 to buy a basket of

food which cost \$100 15 months before. In August 1973, the same foods had cost \$119.32—some 7.8 per cent less than in November. The annual rate of increase for food is 25 per cent.

Transportation costs were up 13.9 per cent from a year before and 4.7 per cent from last August. New cars cost 16.7 per cent more than in November 1972.

Housing cost 6.2 per cent more than in 1972, but the cost of rental actually decreased from last August. The drop was nearly infinitesimal, though, at .8 per cent.

Health and recreation costs were up 8.4 per cent from November 1972. Health insurance costs were up 22.7 per cent from a year ago, although there was no increase from the first quarter of this fiscal year.

The cost for recreational goods rose to add 20.8 per cent to the 1973 price of the sporting life.

Apparel and upkeep costs rose 1 per cent from the last quarter and 7.7 per cent from 1972.