

Order Paper Questions

Canada. These SI units and their prefixes are given in Schedule I of the act. These units are fully compatible and interchangeable with most weights and measures used by other nations employing the metric system. Some countries are slower than others, however, in phasing out the use of certain non-preferred and non-coherent multiples or sub-multiples of metric units which have become obsolete.

- (b) The Canadian tonne or metric ton, meaning 1,000 kg, is a fully interchangeable unit with all other nations. To avoid confusion in verbal communications, the expressions "metric ton" (in English) and "tonne métrique" (in French) should be used to distinguish the tonne from the short and long tons in the imperial system.

8. It is estimated that over half of Canada's trade is already being carried on using metric units. Almost all of Canada's trade is with countries which are either in the process of converting to the metric system or with countries which have historically used metric measurements. The 1980 issue of the Exporters Encyclopedia and World Marketing Guide published by Dun and Bradstreet International Limited states that, "The U.S. is the last industrial country to go metric: only Brunei, Burma, Liberia and Yemen have not adopted the metric system or are in the process of phasing in its use". Since that time, both Brunei and Liberia have announced their intentions to adopt the metric system. Forty-five countries, including the U.S. and Canada, are signatories of the Treaty of the Metre and financially support the research and activities of the General Conference of Weights and Measures (CGPM). Contributing members of CGPM represent only a fraction of the countries in the world using metric measurements. The CGPM co-ordinates the ongoing development of the metric system of measurements units of which the International System of Units (SI) is the latest evolution. All countries profit from the improvements being made to the metric system whether they do or do not contribute financially to the operation of the CGPM.

In 1979, the United States accounted for 72 per cent of Canada's imports and 67 per cent of her exports. It has been estimated that as of December, 1980, over 45 per cent of the exports to the U.S.A., in 31 leading sectors, are described in metric units. The automobile and parts related manufacturing sector in the U.S. and Canada is the leading industry in this regard with about 70 per cent of manufacturing and orders for parts now in metric units.

Outside the U.S., many countries produce and accept only goods described in metric units. Most countries in the European Economic Community and the European Free Trade Area have passed laws which call for the exclusive use of SI units. The EEC is Canada's second most important export market after the United States. Japan, another metric country, is third. In 1979, 14.7 per cent of Canada's exports went to countries which have passed such legislation.

Overseas trade in metric units has become sizeable for many sectors of the Canadian economy. Total Canadian agricultural exports have exceeded \$6 billion per year which represents approximately 40 per cent of farmers' cash receipts. Over 80 per cent of these export products are shipped to metric countries such as the EEC (21.3 per cent), developing countries (22.8 per cent), and Japan (17.7 per cent). Consequently, approximately one third of the farmers' cash income is dependent upon exports to metric countries. During 1979, the Canadian fishing industry processed products having a market value of approximately \$1.713 billion. Over 77 per cent of this value was exported with over 50 per cent of exports going to countries that use only the metric system or are well advanced in converting to its use.

9. Federal government policy concerning metric conversion in the United States is co-ordinated through the interagency committee on metric policy which is chaired by the chairman of the U.S. Metric Board. The role of the U.S. Metric Board is to educate, inform and assist those parties who make a decision to convert. At the federal level, both the U.S. departments of commerce and defense have issued metric conversion plans. The U.S. federal alcohol administration act has been amended and prohibits any sale or import of wines and spirits bottled after January, 1979 (for wines) and January, 1980 (for distilled spirits) unless they are in specific metric only sizes. The conversion of gasoline pumps to litre dispensing is being accomplished by amending state legislation where required. Over 18,000 pumps have been converted as of December, 1980. The U.S. petroleum industry expects that more than 50 per cent of the pumps in the country will be converted by December, 1982.

The voluntary conversion to metric measure by U.S. private industry is being co-ordinated by the American National Metric Council which is funded entirely by its members. As of December, 1980, 46 ANMC sector committees were involved in the planning, scheduling and implementation of metric conversion programs. Several sectors are further advanced than their Canadian counterparts. Dr. Louis Polk, chairman of the U.S. Metric Board, reported at a December, 1980, USMB meeting in New Orleans that the United States was already metric or going metric in 44 different product areas which he listed.

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Question No. 892—Mr. Cossitt:

1. In the past five years, have the payments from the Canada Pension Plan Fund been covered by the contributions and, if not (a) what years are involved (b) in each case, by what amounts were the contributions exceeded by the payments?
2. Is it estimated that contributions will be exceeded by payments in the present fiscal year and, if so, by what amount.
3. In the past five years, did the government at any time find it necessary to use the accumulated assets of the fund in any year to meet a deficit and if so, what was the amount used in each year and the total amount used in all the years?