

Another factor as well is that if these chemicals are handled improperly they present a very major safety hazard. Health and safety concerns are important from the farmers' point of view as well as from the point of view of the consumer and the public at large. If we can overcome the problems of safety and of jeopardizing one's health by using imperial, we should be allowed to use it in a voluntary way. We use two languages in this country. We have labelling which provides for two languages. I see nothing wrong with the application of dual labelling which would provide for both metric and imperial.

There is another thing which should not be forgotten in this debate, that is, that when the Bill converting the grains industry to metric was debated in the House, the matter of hectares was not included. It was deleted from the Bill. Therefore, acres are still the standard unit of measurement within a metric system. That complicates the issue further. At least in western Canada, farmers are still measuring their land in acres. It is really part and parcel of the way the land is surveyed out in western Canada. It has almost become part of the tradition and culture of the agricultural society of western Canada. While they still use acres, farmers must utilize metric to apply the weed spray. Therefore they are using acres, kilograms and grams, which generates massive confusion.

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This motion would provide a very simple way of overcoming that confusion. When we talk about conversion from pounds, gallons and acres, it becomes a very complex procedure in which there is a high potential for error.

Here is another letter sent to the Red Deer *The Advocate* by a person named Donald Hansen who says:

In the real world of basic production, you cannot start on a given day with all new metric tools and equipment.

That is another very valid point. Most of the equipment used by the farmer utilizes the imperial system. While the weed spray, chemicals and herbicides he buys is in metric, the machinery he has uses the imperial system. The seed drill machinery is based on acres and is not converted to hectares. The weed spray devices have tanks that are measured in gallons, not litres. The farmer has this equipment, but he must employ metric using that imperial equipment. The point is made when he says this:

You must, for many years, convert fuel tanks, spray tanks, boom widths, nozzle spacing and size, pressures, flow rates, implement widths, depths and heights, speeds and distances, truck boxes, fertilizer spreaders, ammonia tanks, countless fields and fences, transit rods, natural gas meters, fuel meters, ammonia meters, nitrolators, grain tester charts and measuring vessels.

These are all in imperial. He goes on to say:

Land measure must always be imperial since that is how this country was surveyed.

That is the point I was making earlier. He goes on to say:

I learned that in order to convert my spraying operation completely to metric, I would have to do well in excess of 20 conversions.

It would require 20 conversions in order to make that application. I say that it is a real burden and that it is most unfair.

Metric Conversion

I have another comment from a person by the name of Gil Cyr of Prescott who said:

—'farmers from across the country have been urging the federal and provincial governments to allow such instructions to be put in imperial measure as well as metric. Due to mixups caused by unfamiliarity with the metric system, crops have been chemically burned, ruined and sometimes the produce is even unsafe for human consumption, he said.

'You consumers in the city don't realize how dangerous some of these bad chemical mixes can be—all we've been asking for is to give us the freedom of choice in using either metric or imperial measure,' he said.

I think that really makes the point. We have many clear indicators from the agricultural community that they want the freedom of choice or dual measurement. I know the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) has received many representations from Members of the House, including the Member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil) and the Member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger) on the need to address this very real problem. It could be addressed very easily by simply allowing dual labelling. However, we have seen no sensitivity at all from the Minister of Agriculture.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture has called for dual labelling. As well, the Women for the Survival of Agriculture stated the following in very short and succinct terms:

We want you to know that our group, Women for the Survival of Agriculture, fully endorses dual labelling—metric and imperial, on all farm sprays, chemicals and fertilizers. We feel that dual labelling is a necessity, not a luxury.

The livestock groups have balked at conversion to metric in their industry because of the concerns in other parts of the agricultural sector.

Therefore, this motion really deals with something that is very logical and practical and which makes common sense. If the metric system is so superior, as the Government suggests it is, why are so many farmers unwilling to use it? There may be a time, 10, 15 or 20 years from now, when new generations of farmers may be able to adapt to the metric system easily when the machinery will be adapted to the metric system, but that does not apply today. The fact of the matter is that we now have a program that has been developed that is very bureaucratic, difficult to deal with and the cause of confusion. It has cost farmers and the economy a lot of money.

I appeal to the House to give serious consideration to this motion, because this problem will continue for some time. If we cannot address this very fundamental and simple issue in the House, then I am not sure why we are here. This is where points of view should be debated and where decisions of this nature should be made.

I conclude by saying that beneath the confusion that surrounds this issue perhaps there is another more important underlying issue, that is, the issue of forced metrication without consideration of the rights and freedoms of individual Canadians. We all know that this program was really forced down the throats of Canadians without adequate consideration.

I thought that *The Financial Post* of July 31, 1982, put this whole issue into perspective, in the following words: