

*Oral Questions*

## QUERY RESPECTING SANCTIONS AND QUOTAS

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** The minister, Madam Speaker, has admitted incredible failure after the government was so confident that it could negotiate a satisfactory agreement. The minister of State for International Trade was also quoted this morning as saying that he is considering recommending certain sanctions against Japan on this issue.

I would like to ask the minister can he tell the House what sanctions the government is considering. Is the government, for example, considering that we introduce in this country a Canadian content rule similar to that of Australia, where 85 per cent of the value of foreign cars must be sourced in that country? Is the minister also considering the imposition of quotas on the importation of Japanese cars, such as recommended by the United Auto Workers in a telex that he will be receiving within a few minutes?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, it would certainly be premature to speak of any sanctions. As I mentioned in my previous answer, the negotiations are continuing. What my colleague, the Minister of State for International Trade, said in Tokyo was that all our options remain open.

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● (1130)

## METRIC CONVERSION

## REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

**Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. This past year the economy of Prince Edward Island has been devastated by the government's high interest rate policy. Two of our oldest department stores, Holman's and Moore & McLeod's, were forced either to go out of business or to take extraordinary measures to stay in business. Given that the federal government is forcing Prince Edward Island to convert to metric by June 30, businesses are compelled to take very expensive steps to do so. Will the minister consider postponing the metric conversion in Prince Edward Island at least until P.E.I. survives the current recession?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I do not think the hon. member's allegations are justified. Although a number of businesses in the province of Prince Edward Island may be having some problems, I feel the hon. member is exaggerating, to say the least, if he thinks that metric conversion can jeopardize the survival of a business in his province. There must be other reasons.

*[English]*

## EFFECT OF CONVERSION

**Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough):** Madam Speaker, the minister says that I am exaggerating, so I have this supplementary question. How can the minister justify forcing metric on Prince Edward Island, or in fact on any province, at a time when the retail sector is experiencing record high interest rates, a 77 per cent increase in postal rates, and depressed consumer demand? Does he not agree that forced metric conversion at this time will drive many retail businesses that are marginal out of business?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is apparently against metric conversion, but he should realize that the first piece of legislation in this area was passed in Parliament under Sir John A. Macdonald in 1871, that former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, when he was Prime Minister, created a task force for the implementation of metric conversion, that the former Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, Mr. Stanfield, approved proposals for metric conversion made in Parliament in the early seventies, and that in 1976, all Conservative members of this House voted in favour of legislating metric conversion.

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*[English]*

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## APPLICATIONS FOR PASSPORTS

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Why is it necessary for Canadians applying for Canadian passports to register their place of birth?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, if I understand the import of the hon. member's question as to the registration of the place of birth, I think he is asking why we have the various kinds of entries that we have in the information we seek from passport applicants. The reason is that there is a relative standardization all over the world as to the matters of information that are sought, and if we did not have our passports in the same form it could be that Canadian passport holders would experience some difficulties in some countries. Indeed, there is a general international movement toward even greater standardization in passports.

## REQUEST THAT APPLICATION FORM BE REDESIGNED

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Madam Speaker, the minister will know that the only countries that benefit from this information are the eastern bloc countries, which consider Canadians who are born in an