

comparisons of competitive consumer products.

For these reasons and many others, which are indicated in the White Paper, as I have remarked earlier, the Government believes that adoption of the metric system is ultimately inevitable – and desirable – for Canada. However, no legislative action is contemplated which would make mandatory a general use of metric in place of inch-pound units.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The White Paper outlines what is the start of a long process on the road to metrication. It proposes certain organizational arrangements to plan for and encourage conversion. For example, the Government intends to appoint a preparatory commission which will act at the federal level to co-ordinate the study and planning. A mandate will also be given to the proposed Standards Council of Canada (a bill on this subject is now before the House) so that it may fill a similar role in the more limited area of its responsibilities – that is, the industrial sector and physical standards. Planning and preparation will be encouraged so as to obtain the maximum benefits at the minimum cost to the consumer, to industry and to government at all levels.

Our intention is to study and consult extensively and so to determine what is the best process for this transition. It will be necessary, for example, to decide on the timing of changes appropriate to each individual sector of the economy. In issuing this White Paper, the Government is inviting comments from all interested parties. We hope to obtain the widest possible involvement and co-operation of the community as a whole. Participation of other levels of government, of industry, and of the public at large in this effort will be welcomed and will be of the greatest importance in the attainment of the ultimate objectives for Canada in this area of measurement and standards....

PORT OF CHURCHILL POTENTIAL

Transport Minister Don Jamieson recently tabled in the House of Commons a report entitled *Port of Churchill – Potential for Development*, which was commissioned jointly by the Department of Transport and the National Harbours Board, in co-operation with the Manitoba Royal Commission on Northern Transportation.

The report notes that a major impediment to the use of the port has, up to now, been the severe weather conditions that create several different kinds of ice hazards which have restricted the open season to an average of 82 days a year, usually from July 26 to October 15.

TYPE OF TRAFFIC

Grain exports, particularly wheat, have formed the bulk of port traffic. For example, from 1958 to 1966

an average of 710,000 tons of commodity traffic moved through the port each year. Outbound traffic during this period accounted for 93 per cent of all port activity. Relatively small and sporadic quantities of mineral products and miscellaneous cargo represent the remaining outbound commodities.

There is little likelihood that any potash or petroleum will be exported through Churchill from 1970 to 1985.

The products of forest and mineral resources in Manitoba and Saskatchewan could possibly be shipped through the port to Britain and Western Europe. However, because of forwarding costs and market outlook, it is not expected that the volume of these particular commodities will be substantial; the effect on total potential traffic through the port will not be very great.

Prairie region imports are not expected to assume a major role, at least until 1985. Also, coastal shipping cannot be expected to contribute significantly to the total potential of the port.

It is technically possible to navigate Hudson Bay throughout the year using conventional, strengthened vessels with icebreaker assistance. However, the cost of providing sufficient icebreaker service and other related technical aids would make 12-month operation uneconomic. The technical costs of operating the port for any season in excess of 105 days cannot be justified in economic terms.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The consultants recommend a two-phase development program. The first phase, to 1973, would involve promotional effort and minimum investment, directed to increasing port traffic in the present operating season to the point where the existing port facilities are operating at capacity. It is noted that, despite a savings of 5 cents a bushel in forwarding costs on wheat exports to Britain through Churchill, buyers have been hesitant and have never ordered sufficient wheat through Churchill to test the port capacity. It is possible that this could be attained by allowing buyers a still greater cost advantage compared to other Canadian ports.

The report finds that, if port facilities were to be employed to their capacity, a bottleneck that might occur after 1973 in the grain-cleaning facilities could be avoided by shipping grain that required less thorough cleaning at Churchill.

If, after 1973, the ice problem in the harbor is solved, and the cleaning bottleneck is removed, then the export potential could probably be handled by the existing rail and ocean transportation systems in a 105-day season extended to November 7.

Finally, the consultants recommend that any direct development expense at the port be delayed until at least 1973. At that time, the first-phase development program can be assessed.