

### *Metric System*

I would have no argument with conversion, if, as we have been told, the rest of the world is going that route—but that isn't necessarily so.

For example, we find that Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Great Britain still use the foot and inch in construction because those measurements apparently are more suitable for use in that industry. Lumber in most European countries is sold in board feet as in Canada and the U.S. and even nails are measured in inches not metric.

A change to metric in the lumber industry means smaller sheets of plywood, hardboard and panelling. Four by eight sheets will be about  $\frac{3}{4}$ " narrow and  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " short. Just try to repair, renovate or add to existing buildings. Are we going to change all new houses and buildings to suit the size of lumber or buy lumber to suit our method of building?

A neighbour just bought a new tractor made by John Deere in its factory in Germany. The tractor was made in Germany, and the motor made in France but it is all S.A.E. (not metrically) equipped. Given the tremendous economic power of the U.S., which system is going to predominate? I contend that it may take quite a few years before we know.

● (2030)

For all Western Canada particularly—change from the mile and acre just isn't practical. Both come under provincial jurisdiction. The mile, because the province sets the speed limits and erects the road signs. The acre because land titles are registered by the province.

The bushel will continue to be used because of custom and because of practicality. The metric Kg is too small and the tonne is too large for every day use by farmers. Is 60 bu./acre not easier than 1.63 tonnes/acre or 50 bu./acre than 1.36 tonnes/acres?

Try spraying crops by the metric method when our sprayer tanks are measured in gallons. Which is easier to figure; a 200 gallon tank or a 919.2 litre tank? A 10 gallon/acre spray tip or a 45.46 litre/acre spray tip? Or are we to all buy new tanks and sprayer tips?

Metric conversion in the U.S. is to be on a voluntary basis; and for Canada to rush headlong into the change without even assessing the pros and cons and the costs of each change is hard for me to understand.

The farmers of Region 10 of Uniform, have asked me to express these concerns publicly and to the government departments involved.

Personal letters to Premier Lougheed, Dr. Horner and Mr. M. Moore are the most effective method of influencing the government in this matter.

Stan Bell,  
Uniform Director  
Region 10

There are many other similar letters and representations that I could place on the record. What we in this House are asking the government to do is simply this. We are asking for some flexibility and accommodation on behalf of the farmers of Canada. We have asked specifically that the acre and the bushel be preserved. The government responded by saying that if we are going to convert, we must convert to a pure system. As the article pointed out, there are not too many pure metric systems in the world.

As I said earlier, the United States is proceeding on a voluntary basis; persuasion but not coercion. We know they are going to retain the acre and the bushel. The United Kingdom has made exceptions. Sweden and South America, which are on the metric system, have made exceptions. I repeat, there is hardly a so-called pure metric system in the world.

Furthermore, I am not sure whether the metric system is as simple and convenient as we have been led to believe. I

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

discussed the metric system with a surveyor who works for the Canadian forces. He reminded me that there are four different sizes of metres used throughout the world. I will place them on record so that those who follow this debate will know we have looked at the issue very thoroughly.

There are two sizes of metres used in the United States, 3.2808399 feet and 3.280833 feet. I am told that Canada is going to use another size, 3.28083980. The British use another size, 3.280843. That is hardly simplistic and hardly uniform.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his allotted time has expired. He may continue only with unanimous consent. Does the hon. member have consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I thank hon. members for giving me the opportunity to conclude my remarks. I reiterate, it hardly augurs well for simplicity, convenience and uniformity. It is more like confusion and inconvenience. I know that the application of the metric system, particularly to agriculture in Canada, will cause undue hardship, inconvenience and confusion. It will create additional costs. I plead with the minister seriously to reconsider this measure. I ask him seriously to consider some of the pleas we have been making on behalf of the producers of western Canada. I implore him to give the farmers of western Canada an opportunity to express their views directly. Give the farmers an opportunity to participate in the democratic process. Let them be heard. Let them participate directly with the elected representatives of the parliament of Canada.

The minister rejected our proposal. I invite him to come forth with his proposal. What is his government going to do in terms of setting up this consultative mechanism? Whatever it may be, I hope he will give the western farmers the opportunity to present their views and place them clearly on the record. Then and only then will the best interests of the producer be served. Then and only then will democracy and our parliamentary institutions be best served. With that in mind, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga):

That Bill C-23 be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time six months from now.

**Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of the amendment put forward by my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski). This is the third opportunity I have had to participate in this debate. It is obvious that the majority of the constructive proposals that this party has put forward are falling on deaf ears.

The hon. member for Vegreville asked the minister responsible for small business whether he would accept some of our suggestions. The minister assured the House at that time that he was interested in our proposals. During the course of this debate we have found out just how interested the minister is in our proposals. We suggested that the clauses dealing with the