

Ready for the metric system April Fool's Day?

Well, people, April first is coming. No, it's not your Mother's birthday. Tuesday, the first of April is the day that Canada will jump wholeheartedly into the metric system. To most of us this sobering fact has not completely sunk in. In the not so distant future, we are going to be living metrically. We'll be buying our meat by the kilogram, our milk by the litre. Lumber will be purchased by the metre and our cars will be weighed in metric tons.

See what we mean? The future is obviously going to bring confusion, but to what degree we will be confused is up to us, so it seems.

There is no point in discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the metric system now. It's coming and we couldn't do anything about it if we wanted to. Instead, we had better start worrying about how we are going to prepare for it.

How will the metric system affect us? Well, where we're sitting right now it's about twenty-three degrees and no, we're not sitting in a snowbank. That's metric for seventy-nine. Soon, temperatures will be given in celcius degrees on weather forecasts. It might help to remember that twenty-two degrees C is about seventy-five degrees F (the average room temperature), 0 degrees celcius is the freezing point of water, and water boils at one hundred and two degrees C. (220 degrees fahrenheit). Remembering these three points can help you put other metric temperatures into the proper perspective.

We won't be walking miles to classes anymore either, we'll be walking kilometers. If we multiply the number of miles by 1.6, we'll get a fair approximation of the distance in kilometres. For instance, five miles is about eight

km. Also, ninety-six km. per hr. is not speeding. We're doing sixty right on.

The metric system is going to have its greatest effect on our shopping habits. As students, most of us have to be pretty careful of our budgets. It's going to be a little harder to tell which is the best deal, a 1.253 kg. package of something for 87 cents or a 1.853 kg. package at \$1.20. Incidentally, the latter is a better deal. At least we can be thankful that some products are a standardized size and weight from manufacturer to manufacturer, such as weiners, milk, bread, butter, etc.

Well, we've heard enough examples. The point we're trying to make is this change is going to have a pretty large effect on our lifestyle, and that the government, who is initiating this program, is doing very little to educate the public. So far, the best they have done is to give

distances, temperatures, etc.—in both systems, which does little or no good as we are only going to read the measurements that we know. Sure, we can send away to Ottawa for training packages, but how many of us are going to do that? Let's face it, the majority of us are lazy. As we see it, something more dramatic must be done soon to make this change less painful for us.

We need a large scale advertising program, something that people can't avoid (other than a total immersion program, as we are now faced with).

More seminars for the public to take part in would be a great help also. To date, we know of only one being held in this area. Programs that reach out to the public have to be developed. We feel the government is just leaving us to figure it all out the best way we know how.

We, as students, are probably the best off in Canada. When you

think of our parents who have, in most cases, had little previous contact with the metric system, you wonder how they will make out. It's going to be an aggravating period for housewives and business persons all over the country.

So this is how it is: we're being thrown into a system that most Canadians know nothing about, and there's not enough being done to educate us. One of two things can happen—

1) The government will introduce effective teaching programs before it's too late.

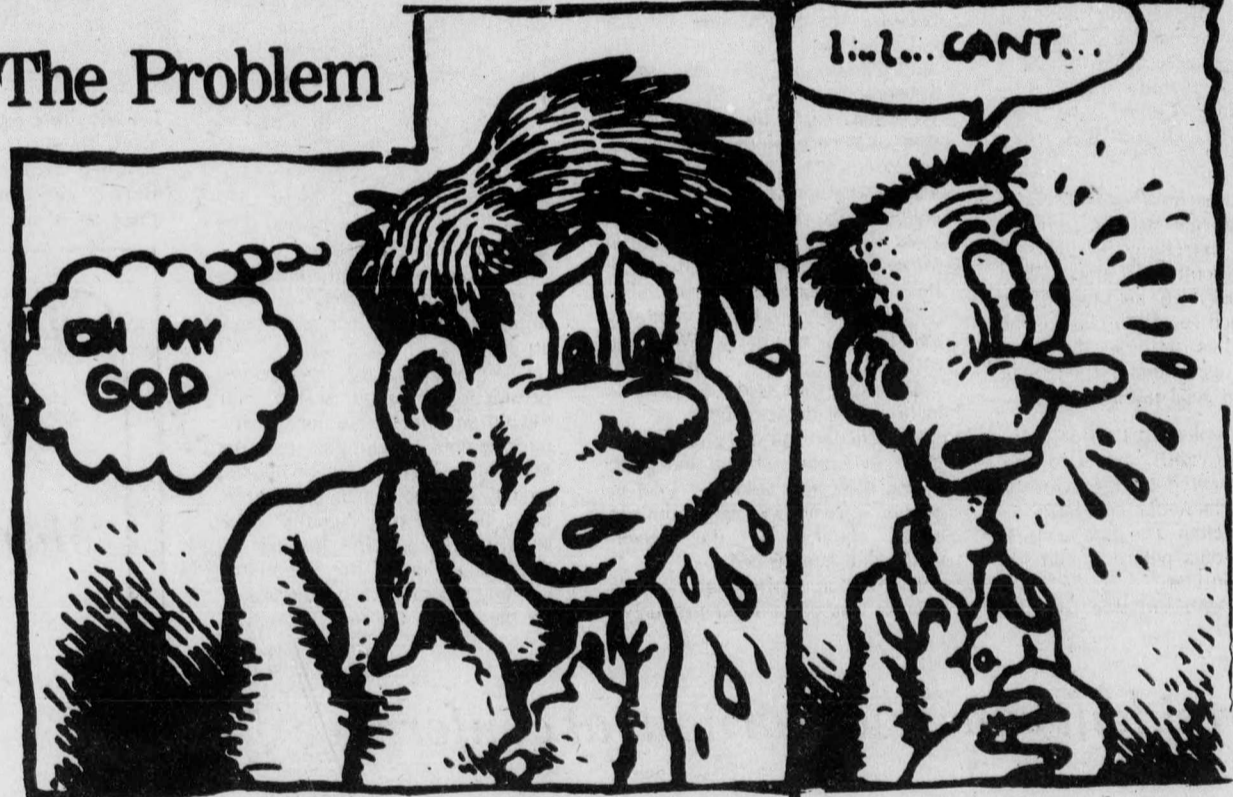
OR

2) We'll be thrown into a foreign system without receiving any instruction except for that which we give ourselves.

We don't really have much hope for the first one, so that leaves only the second.

So public, watch out. THE CHANGE is coming. Let's prepare ourselves before it's too late.

The Problem



THE BRUNSWICKAN

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Susan Manzer

MANAGING EDITOR Tom Benjamin

EDITORS

news Derwin Gowan
sports Bob Potter
inside Sheryl Wright
features Dave Simms
photo Steve Patriquen

ADVERTISING MANAGER Don Mersereau

AD DESIGN & LAYOUT Judy Orr
Diane Shaw
Pat MacFarland

BUSINESS MANAGER Stephen Fox

SECRETARY Sarah Ingersoll

Staff This Week

Duc Doherty
John Timmins
John Lumsden
Rick Baston
James Walker
Colin Calnan
Mike Carey
Kathy Lewis
Alex Varty
Danielle Thibeault
Bev Hills
Hillary Randall
Tom Best
Lona Touckly
John Timmins

Margot Brewer
Nancy Colpitts
Gordon Rogers
Lorne McIntosh
Rick Fisher
Jo Anne Jefferson
Lorna Pitcher
Dawn Elgee
John Lumsden
S. Gordon Emmerson
Nancy Ferguson
Agnes Hennessey
Pat Potter
Kathy Westman
Lorne Parker

Phantom Photog
Alex Mackay

One hundred and ninth year of publication. Canada's Oldest Official Student Publication. A member of Canadian University Press. The Brunswickan, "New Brunswick's largest weekly at the Fredericton campus of the University of New Brunswick. Opinions expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the Student Representative Council or the Administration of the University. The Brunswickan office is located in the Student Union Building, College Hill, Fredericton, N.B. Printed at University Press of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B. Subscriptions, \$3 per year. Postage paid in cash at the Third Class Rate. Permit No. 7 National advertising rates available through Youthstream, 307 Davenport Road, Toronto. Local ad rates available at 453-4983.