

Order Paper Questions

iciency, as well as in terms of market opportunities foregone. The costs incidental to metric conversion in the Canadian economy will not reach their peak until the years 1977 and 1978 when world trade would be expected to have resumed a normal rate of growth.

3. (a) Yes. (b) The White Paper notes that "conversion of units during commercial negotiations (necessary now in world trade in primary commodities) may be a handicap and a source of error. In the case of exports by secondary industries the problem is with the differences in standards and therefore in the products themselves." Until such time as industries formulate their individual plans with respect to their timing and method of conversion it would not be possible to estimate the short term benefits of standardization on our trade position.

4. (a) Cabinet has approved a program of loans and loan guarantees to be available to small businesses, to be called the Small Business Metric Conversion Assistance Program. Such loan assistance would be available to businesses facing special financing difficulties resulting from metric conversion when such businesses were unable to obtain financing from commercial lending institutions. (b) and (c) Counselling services to small business will be available through the facilities of CASA (Counselling Assistance to Small Enterprises) or the Federal Business Development Bank when this takes over the responsibility for the work now performed by CASE.

5. The steps the government has taken to protect smaller manufacturing firms facing special financing difficulties are state in 4 above. There are no indications at the present time however that smaller manufacturing firms will incur heavy financial outlays for conversion or that imports from historically metric countries will be significantly affected by Canada's change to the use of metric units. As stated in the White Paper on Metric Conversion "Given a clear direction in which to go, many sectors of the nation will have few problems in conversion, provided the transitional process is wisely phased."

6. There is no evidence that conversion to metric units will adversely affect Canada's trade balance. The Government believes that Canadian entrepreneurs have at least equal ability with foreign competitors to take advantage of the change.

7. The Government would continue to respect the relevant provisions of GATT, particularly as it concerns non-tariff barriers.

8. Two general aspects may be distinguished when considering the subject of education as related to converting to the metric system: (1) matters affecting usage by the general public. In this respect, the amounts spent or

allocated for the Information and Education Directorate of the Metric Commission have been as follows: 1973-73, \$115,200; 1973-74, \$672,300; 1974-75, \$1,887,800. (2) matters relating to formal teaching in schools and similar institutions are the responsibility of the provinces.

9. Since metric conversion will proceed over a number of years in a way to be determined by the needs and opportunities in different sectors of the economy, the cost of conversion is, by that fact, undeterminable at this time. Its magnitude will depend on the pace and the phasing of conversion adopted within and without the respective sectors. As stated in the answer to Section 1 of the question the supporting data for any additional analysis do not at present exist. The White Paper states that conversion in any industrially advanced nation is a complex and costly process, but the costs are expected to be more than offset by the benefits arising from the simplicity in the use of the more rational system of units and from the improved ability to communicate both commercially and in other ways with the growing metric community. Given sufficient notice of the required conversion, costs for changes in measuring devices used in distributive trades dealing with consumer goods would not appear to be onerous for any one establishment. In a number of industry sectors the magnitude of costs will depend on the rate of conversion and could be minimized by phasing to coincide with cycles of tool design and equipment obsolescences. The experience of most countries that have already undertaken metric conversion is that actual costs have been very substantially less than estimates made by individual firms.

SHIPS UNDER CHARTER WITH CANADIAN NATIONAL

Question No. 1,733—Mr. Carter:

1. What are the names and number of ships under charter to Canadian National and operating in the Atlantic area?
2. What is the cost and duration of the charter in each case and the name of the company from whom they are chartered?
3. What was the cost to Canadian National for repairs to and/or maintenance of such ships since being chartered by Canadian National and operating in the Atlantic area?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Vessels under charter to CNR Atlantic Region: 1. *MV Stena Sailer*^a, *MV Marine Atlantica*^a, *MV Marine Nautica*, *MV Percy M. Crosbie*, *MV Marine Sprinter*, *MV Marine Runner*^a, *MV Marine Packer*, *MV Sarah*, *MV Clyde*, *MV Kloster*, *MV Topsail Star*, *MV Dunure*, *MV Marine Trader*.

^aDelivery of vessel anticipated early June, 1975.

^bTo be returned to owner early June, 1975.

2.

Vessel	Owner	Daily Charter Rate	Duration of Charter	From
<i>MV Stena Sailer</i> ^a	Stena Line A/B	\$5,425	13 months	May 1974
<i>MV Marine Atlantica</i>	Stena Line A/B	7,550	60 months	June 1975
<i>MV Marine Nautica</i>	Stena Line A/B	7,550	60 months	Oct. 1974
<i>MV Percy M. Crosbie</i>	Chimo Shipping Ltd.	548	36 months	June 1974
<i>MV Marine Runner</i>	Eastern Shipping Ltd.	415	60 months	June 1975
<i>MV Marine Packer</i>	Rideau Shipping Ltd.	985	36 months	June 1974
<i>MV Marine Sprinter</i>	Mose Ambrose Shipping Ltd.	450	60 months	May 1974
<i>MV Sarah</i>	The Lake Group Ltd.	1,387	8 months	April 1975

[Mr. Clermont.]