

Metric System

nonsense and confusion! It is unnecessary. If we are going to make the changeover, I think it is important that we be co-ordinated and synchronized with our major trading partners. The government has completely and totally ignored that.

I could quote many more letters. Before I conclude I must say that I take exception to a document called "Metric Monitor". Its reporting of the proceedings of the standing committee were certainly biased and slanted with one view in mind. It recorded every point of view which was in support of metric conversion. It certainly did not give a balanced reporting of the opposition point of view and the point of view of other hon. members who expressed reservations. Everything in the "Metric Monitor" is totally biased and I think it is unfair that we as taxpayers are paying for it. The "Metric Monitor" has not given the Canadian people an accurate reflection of the proceedings in the committee which considered this bill. I think that is very unfortunate.

That is the kind of thing we will have if the minister allows bureaucrats to engage in this kind of consultative process. The minister says he wants consultation. We have provided an avenue so that he may proceed that way. We believe the consultation should be with elected members of parliament, and not with bureaucrats. We believe the committee should travel and that it should hear any and all available evidence. Any producer or any group should be able to come before that committee and make his or their position known. Then, and only then, will the minister have a clear record of the views of the grassroots producers, those who will be affected by this legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Before I call on the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger) I would like to make my decision on the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton).

I still feel that I should resist the amendment in its present form. The latter part of the amendment limits the instruction to the committee. The hon. member proposes that this bill be referred back to the committee for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 2, 6, 8 and 10 in the light of further evidence. It is that portion which worries me a little.

I am not very satisfied with the precedents I have found, but in recent years, on occasions like this, the Chair has had the tendency to resist this kind of limiting instruction. I do not think it renders a service to the committee to suggest that it get the bill back for the purpose of hearing evidence only from the grain industry and especially farmers. This might leave the impression with the committee that other witnesses might not be welcome or might not be included in the instructions of the House. Without really having good precedents to back up my decision, that alone should be a good reason for it.

Citation 418 of Beauchesne's says, in effect, that there are things we can do more easily at second reading than at third reading. That does not really touch on this point particularly, but it might be worth while to read the citation to the House.

[Mr. Mazankowski.]

It is found at page 288 of Beauchesne's. Beginning on the sixth line, the citation reads as follows:

On the second reading of a bill, an amendment may be moved expressing opinions as to any circumstances connected with its introduction or prosecution, or seeking further information in relation to the bill by committees or commissioners, the production of papers or other evidence, or the opinion of judges. This cannot be done on the third reading because it is not directly connected with any provision of the bill.

That does not really go to the point I want to make, but I feel that the way the amendment is worded it is half a recommittal amendment and half a reasoned amendment. I find it difficult to accept that in the same amendment. We perhaps tend, by this limitation, to indicate a reason why we tend to support a motion to prevent the third reading of a bill by implying that it might not correspond with the wishes of a special group of people, the grain industry or farmers, and I would consider that more on the side of a reasoned amendment.

This amendment would refer the bill back to the committee with a specific instruction to reconsider clauses 2, 6 and 8, and 10, and there is also a limitation. The hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) at the outset of his remarks indicated that hon. members who support the amendment might accept the suggestion of the Chair to modify it, with the unanimous consent of the House, by eliminating all the words after "and 10", which does not preclude any hon. member speaking in favour of the amendment from saying whatever he wishes and repeating what has been taken out of the amendment.

If it is satisfactory to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain and to the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers), and if there is unanimous consent, I would be prepared to accept the amendment in this limited form.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for your ruling. We are quite prepared to cut off my amendment after the number 10, but I wonder if the Chair would object to putting in the word "thereof", following the pattern of a precedent on January 26, 1976. Whatever the word "thereof" means, it seems to make the motion sound very good.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We agree thereto.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion as amended?

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, I thought for a minute that the minister was going to agree to the amendment, but then I saw him ready to jump to his feet. As the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) was speaking, I could see that he was capturing the heart of the minister. It was a tremendous speech which outlined the opinions and wishes of farmers in western Canada.