

Metric System

Mr. Crosbie: My golly, he is right on the bit, there. It says:

The unit of measure for the sale of gas by energy units shall be the megajoule or the British thermal unit.

Well, on behalf of the right hon. member for Prince Albert I am glad to see the word British left there. What is this word "megajoule"? What language is that? Is the minister who was formerly without portfolio and is now without culture here tonight to explain to us what language the megajoule is?

Mrs. Holt: Talk about lack of culture, for heaven's sake!

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. lady from Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) is definitely a jewel. I don't know whether she is a megajoule or not. But who will explain what a megajoule is?

Here is an even better example that we should notice:

The unit of measure for the sale of gas by mass shall be the kilogram.

What does that mean? I ask the minister from Alberta: does the oil and gas industry know about this? Have they been alerted to this? Do they know that the btu's are going to be megajoules—that the family jewels are going to be btu's, or whatever, and that gas is going to be sold en masse by the kilogram? Have the lobbyists been paying so much attention to the Mackenzie Valley pipeline that legislation like this is going through the House without their knowledge?

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. lady from Vancouver-Kingsway wants to rise on a point of order I see no reason why she should not. She is sitting there, mumbling away, disturbing my train of thought to the point at which I have not been able to put together a disconnected sentence tonight.

Mrs. Holt: How can you put it together when you haven't a thought to begin with?

Mr. Crosbie: How much is beef on the hoof going to be under the new system? The hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave) spoke eloquently earlier today. He has a lot of beef on the hoof and he is a worried gentleman. He is a productive member of this Chamber, and there are a lot of productive people in Western Canada who will be considerably less productive if this bill goes through. I do not know how long it will take to get people used to this system.

Another thing. I am sick and tired of hearing the temperature here in centigrade, or whatever it is. Let us have the old fahrenheit given with the old centigrade. I get up in the morning and hear it is seven degrees. So I get out my muffler, my coat, my hat and my boots, and out I go. I find it is not seven degrees, but something like 30 degrees.

Mr. Horner: Forty-seven!

Mr. Crosbie: Then I hear it is 22 degrees. I still go out in my coat and my muffler and find it is well in the seventies. I am fed up with it. If I am to live here in Ottawa I want to know what the temperature is.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired. If he wishes to continue he must get the consent of all hon. members. Is there consent?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mrs. Holt: Twenty minutes of nothing is enough.

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I shall not take up the time of the House for too long after that excellent address by my hon. friend from St. John's West. It was a pleasure to listen to. In fact it gave us the same kind of joy as the results of the Ontario provincial election tonight—the splendid victory of the Progressive Conservative party, justifying again the decision to go to the people for a mandate to carry on the good work in the province.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I have not spoken on this legislation before tonight and I wish to express my concern with respect to this exercise in futility in which the government is engaged. The minister stated in response to my hon. friend from Vegreville that the government had no intention of proclaiming the legislation until, as I understand it, he had gone through a process of consultation with the farmers of Western Canada. The government House leader was in the Chamber earlier tonight. We have heard him rant and rage about the irrelevance of parliament, the fact that parliament is not really accomplishing its legislative tasks. Yet he has the audacity to bring forward a bill for discussion this evening which the responsible minister tells us he has no intention of having proclaimed until further consultation has taken place. I have not seen a greater waste of the time of parliament since I came here.

The consultative process in which the minister proposes to engage will not take place overnight. The hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) will recall the discussion we had in connection with the western grains stabilization bill. I might say that although I reject the hon. member's position absolutely with respect to crossing the floor, I still have respect for him as a man whom I have known for a long period of time, a man whom I like personally.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I am not unhappy about saying that. We have been friends for a long time. He will recall the fights we put up to get consultation with the western farmer with respect to the western grains stabilization bill. He will remember that our efforts were rejected by the government. He will remember what a fight we had to put up to get the agricultural committee of this House to visit western Canada. Only after the greatest pressure was brought to bear on the minister responsible for the legislation was there a condescension to allow members of parliament to go to western Canada and hold hearings, receive briefs, and to bring about an educational process.