

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 11, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (1105)

## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

### METRIC CONVERSION

#### ADOPTION OF METRIC SYSTEM—WESTERN ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FRENCH CANADIANS

**Mrs. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Montreal-Mercier):** Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to make a few comments on the metric system which is now being used in 150 countries. In Canada, it was adopted unanimously by Parliament in 1971, after which the system was introduced gradually across Canada.

Madam Speaker, the metric system has definite advantages. Today, as a result of an agreement with the provinces, our children are learning the metric system in schools across Canada. I may also point out that the Common Market countries and also the United States are using the metric system. Furthermore, from October 1981 to September 1982, Canada had a surplus trade balance of \$11 billion, and one wonders what effect converting back from the metric system to the old imperial system would have on our balance of trade.

Madam Speaker, I am very concerned about the protests we have been seeing for a number of months, which are being led by our Opposition colleagues who after thirteen years are trying to undo legislation that was passed by Parliament. When I went out West not long ago, Madam Speaker, I was also concerned about the fact that people were saying that the metric system was being used by French Canadians to take over the economy of the West. Madam Speaker, I think nothing is further from the truth—

[English]

And I urge my fellow colleagues on the other side of Parliament to respect this institution—

**Madam Speaker:** Order.

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### FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

#### SUGGESTED ADOPTION OF AGRI-BOND SCHEME

**Mr. Bud Bradley (Haldimand-Norfolk):** Madam Speaker, the plight faced by agriculture in Canada has been brought to the attention of the House many times. We have pointed out

the high cost of energy, labour, seed and equipment, among other things. We have also pointed out the high cost of money. We have requested more money and lower rates for the Farm Credit Corporation, and more money for small business development bonds. We have called on the Government to allow farmers to invest in the Farm Credit Corporation and be allowed to write off their interest returns. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, as well as many other farm organizations, are now calling on the Government to consider agri-bonds. Why not allow farmers to help farmers? They are capable and willing.

We are in a period of accelerating farm bankruptcies and sales. We have more and more farmers, of all ages, finding themselves in the interest rate squeeze. Agri-bonds would allow farmers with funds to invest in the Farm Credit Corporation. Because interest paid on the bonds would be tax deductible, the Farm Credit Corporation could pay a lower interest return on this money. This would then allow the Farm Credit Corporation to loan funds back to needy farmers at a lower rate. If present Government assistance to the Farm Credit Corporation prevailed, rates could be reduced even further. I call on the Government to consider this method of farm financing now, not next year when it will be too late for too many.

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### CANADA-UNITED STATES TEST AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

#### PROPOSED TESTING OF CRUISE MISSILE

**Mr. Paul E. McRae (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** Madam Speaker, the Government's communique on Cruise testing states the air launched Cruise missile will help modernize the U.S. Strategic Air Command, part of the United States deterrent force on which North American security depends. In other words, we are testing a strategic weapon system in terrain and conditions entirely different from the conditions which brought about the decision to deploy ground launched Cruise missiles in Europe to counter the Soviets' SS-20. I cannot conceive of any terrain or weather conditions in eastern Germany, Poland, or European Russia, that in any way resemble Canada's far north. How can testing the common