

*Standards Council of Canada*

and still is, to give to the Council paramount responsibility in the private sector for encouraging preparations for changes over to the metric system so as to achieve optimum benefits at a minimum cost. Specifically, it would be the Standards Council which would initiate studies, planning, consultations and be the ultimate organization for a co-ordinated approach to the conversion which would need to be capable of flexible adjustment to the evolving situation in Canada and abroad. In this instance we need somebody quite *au fait*, quite well informed.

There is no doubt, as the hon. member for Malpeque intimated, that the speed of the conversion will vary from one industry to another. In some individual sectors the conversion has already taken place; in other sectors it cannot take place until the conversion is carried out in the United States. So we need somebody quite well informed on all these facts to direct the effort that we want to see made in carrying out the conversion to the metric system.

## [Translation]

Mr. Speaker, having all my life advocated flexibility, compromise and co-operation, I am willing today to set an example and prove that I do what I preach.

Since the beginning of this debate, and particularly during the recent sittings of the house which were devoted to it, many conversations, as I already mentioned, have taken place between my officials and representatives of the C.S.A. and the C.E.M.A.—the Canadian Electrical Manufacturers' Association—provincial governments and other agencies of all kinds.

Mr. Speaker, I myself took part in some of those meetings. Other similar meetings are contemplated, one I think for tomorrow, between the officials of my department and the representatives of the Canadian Standards Association.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, that interested people have arrived at a consensus. I should say rather that there is at this time a consensus regarding the establishment of that council. There does not seem to be any more objections to the establishment of the council itself.

• (4:50 p.m.)

As I said earlier, many who had reservations were comforted and reassured, since in any case they were in full agreement from the beginning.

But we still face difficulties about the definition of the powers of the Council to be

[Mr. Pepin.]

and the choice of words which for some are too dynamic, too "active". They would want more "passive" words.

Mr. Speaker, I am ready to do the necessary efforts to reconcile all grammar and vocabulary experts on this matter. I think that we should now refer the bill to the committee in order to seek, like men of good will, some compromise.

I wish to make it clear, because I do not want to be charged with having given wrong impressions, that I am not at all desirous to change the substance of this bill. I want very much, however, to please the parties concerned about the formulas defining, for example, the relationship between the Council and the standards organizations.

In any case, the Canadian Standards Association is now ready to appear before the committee—at least according to my information—to submit a brief and discuss changes it would like to see made in the legislation.

As for me, I fully agree with that. Besides, I think that this bill should have been referred to the committee a long time ago.

## [English]

I hope that at this time the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) will stand up and accept my very cordial invitation—

**Mr. McGrath:** The minister's cordiality is a little late.

**Mr. Pepin:** —to withdraw his amendment and allow the bill to go to committee.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Lundrigan:** I was about to reply to the minister's suggestion that I withdraw the amendment. That was the intention of the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate, previously, but having listened to the minister I am now more convinced than ever that there is a need for the amendment and that the sections of the bill granting certain of the powers need to be redrafted. I also wish to say that it is my impression the minister has misrepresented the views of the opposition, who agreed in principle with the bill but not with the extent of the powers provided by it. That is the reason for our amendment.