

means that between \$4 billion and \$10 billion will have to be spent here to convert to the metric system.

As I said earlier, it appears that the government, even though we are facing inflationary times and massive government spending, is not concerned at all with the cost of converting to the metric system. One has only to look at the record of the government to be rather hesitant to support anything that it brings forward.

Sidestepping the issue of metrication for a moment, if we review some of the past happenings on the part of this administration we see that in this country we are facing record inflation, record unemployment, record trade deficits, record budgetary deficits—

Mr. McKenzie: Record deficits everywhere.

Mr. Elzinga:—record interest rates, record mortgage rates, and record over-all prices. We have the highest level of foreign borrowing of any industrialized nation. The way this government has driven us into debt is indeed frightening. As the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie) said, we have record budgetary deficits. We find eight out of the last nine budgets presented by this government to this House were deficit budgets. When the minister decides to enter into this debate, I hope he will share with us exactly what metrication is going to cost Canadians.

● (2020)

We received a commitment from the minister that certain portions of this legislation will not be proclaimed until he consults with the various farm organizations. We on this side of the House want more than just what he says. We want some specifics so that we can be assured they will abide by what they are saying to us. We have seen them talking out of both sides of their mouths too often. One only has to look back at the 1974 election, and the flip-flop which occurred shortly after that election in regard to wage and price controls. One can go further back than that and look at the 1972 election when we advocated a modest increase for pensioners and the indexing of personal income taxes. At that time we were severely criticized by our honourable opponents.

Mr. McKenzie: Honourable? Come off it.

Mr. Elzinga: Maybe I should say "not so honourable". Immediately after the 1972 election, when they formed their minority position, we found them implementing exactly what they had criticized us for. On many occasions our party has attempted to be helpful in dealing with this legislation, but we find Liberal members opposite are not willing to take a little bit of good advice and give in to the wishes of the western farmer. Since they have refused to abide by the good advice we have shared with them in respect to this legislation, I can assure hon. members opposite that we are going to put up a strenuous fight in opposition to this bill. If they have any hope of recessing on June 30 with this legislation passed as it is, I think they should seriously reconsider it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Metric System

Mr. Elzinga: It is obvious some Canadians are going to be hurt more than others when we convert to the metric system.

Mr. Marchand: Sharpen up your arrows.

Mr. Elzinga: Oh, we shall.

Mr. Paproski: Look who is sharpening the arrows.

Mr. Elzinga: The over-all cost in the end is going to be assumed by the consumer because of the increase in commodity prices. This is another example of the lack of concern which this administration has for the western farmer. As I said earlier, I have not heard one member opposite speaking to this amendment. That only leads me to believe that there is no one on that side who is seriously interested in representing the view of the western Canadian farmer.

In closing, I commend the hon. member for Red Deer and the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain for bringing forward the amendment. It was encouraging to see the discussion we had in private members' hour also. We found much the same thing as we are finding in this debate, two western individuals in the Progressive Conservative party put forward a proposition to the government respecting production of papers, and hon. members on that side of the House did not see fit to respond with a western member even though it concerned allegations in the province of Saskatchewan. It is extremely disappointing that a government hoping to govern a nation does not recognize the views of a certain segment of our population, that specifically being western Canadians.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure tonight in rising to support the amendment to refer this bill back to committee. I also take pleasure in the fact that some great members of parliament who sat in this House came from the constituency in which I was born. As a member of parliament, I spoke first as the member for Bow River, Alberta, and now I speak as the member for Calgary North, which is a seat which was created in 1968. My grandfather settled there in 1883.

Like many hundreds of thousands of people, my father went out to western Canada. He stopped at a place called Saskatoon. At that time there were two houses, a few tents and a slew on Second Avenue. My father was a city boy, a chartered accountant from London, although he was Welsh. He met a man by the name of MacMillan from Glengarry, Ontario. They had a discussion concerning where he should settle and decided to go southwest of Saskatoon. At that time in 1905 there was no railroad. On that site today there is a town by the name of Rosetown. There used to be a constituency by the name of Rosetown-Biggan. A very distinguished gentleman used to have breakfast at my home on many occasions, a Mr. M. J. Coldwell.

An hon. Member: A great Canadian!

Mr. Woolliams: Yes, he was a great Canadian. He was a very able member of parliament and was always a gentleman.