

use the *catty*". "But," I said, "your officials always use hectares and tonnes". They said, "Yes, but in the people's culture it is the *mu*, a sixth of an acre, and the weight measurement is a *catty* that the farmer can handle and lift". The Chinese farmer understands the *mu*—it has been used in China for 6,000 years. So even in a revolutionary society such as the People's Republic of China they would not consider changing the land measurement; they simply make the official do the conversion into the so-called metric system, the way we have always done it in Canada. But in Canada we do not have respect for people any more. We do not let them keep their culture, we do not let them change gradually. We force the change through because the experts say that is the quickest way—you kill or you cure. I think that somebody's hide is going to be cured this time.

I think that under this Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) we have lost the ability to be flexible. We have lost the ability to be democratic, and we are simply taking the word from up high. Infallibility has long since passed from the scene in the modern world. It is not the Pope's infallibility we are talking about; we are talking about the infallibility of the Prime Minister, and there are several other ministers who hope they have the characteristic of infallibility too. You cannot run Canada on the principle of infallibility. All you can do is to move forward a little bit at a time; that is the way you make progress.

I want to conclude with a statement made with respect to the history of our country written by Donald Creighton. I mentioned this before and I mention it again. His volume 18 on the history of Canada from 1939 to 1957 is entitled "The Forked Road". In that volume he pointed out that Canada, during those years of war and the 12 years afterwards, took the wrong fork in the road. Then he said that we surrendered as a nation to Keynes, Beveridge and Burnham; Keynes with his monetary theory that would solve all our problems; Beveridge with his cradle to the grave doctrine which would keep everybody supplied with social welfare; and Burnham with his doctrine of the managerial elite. Who won the war? The managerial elite run this country. They are the ones who guide the ministries. They are the ones who terrify the backbenchers.

So long as you depend on the special breed of people who come up through these pyramids in the civil service and a dozen people tell you what to do, this is the state in which we will find ourselves. We have lost our respect for the common people. We have alienated ourselves from them as an institution, and we have gone a long way in attacking the foundations of democracy to send this country down the wrong fork in the road.

You have seen and heard members of this party do their level best to try to put the facts before the government. We pointed out that the hectare will cause a whole lot of trouble in Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes, as well as in the west. It is not a permanent part of the metric system; it is only in there temporarily. Yet we are being forced to accept a temporary term that will upset us, all in the name of keeping everything

neat and tidy and efficient according to Burnham's theory of the managerial elite.

Canada as a nation took the wrong road when fighting the war in 1939 and the years afterwards, the road of controls, the road of loss of freedom. What is necessary now is to get back to basic truths; you do not force Canadians to bow to the wisdom of a managerial elite which learns nothing and forgets nothing. I call them nitwits, and everybody can understand.

That is the perspective in which this issue must be seen. We have sold our souls to experts who are exacting a terrible price from us in the loss of our democratic traditions. It is a sorry day when I have to stand in the House and make the charges I am making tonight, but I make them in honesty and sincerity. I say that even on a simple matter such as the metric system the government will not use the ordinary democratic procedures that would make this system work. That is why we have no choice but to tell the people of the country that the only party in the House which has stood up and fought on this issue was Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, the Progressive Conservative Party.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (2120)

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): We want this country to tackle the monetary and economic issues which are before us and not be distracted by issues which are purely emotional and which have nothing to do with the problems ahead of us. I hope this metric debate has served one useful function; I hope it has convinced many people that their voices are not going to get heard by this government as long as this government lasts and as long as the government stays under the heels of this so-called managerial elite.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to participate in this debate and particularly to follow the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton), who always gets to the heart of the matter under discussion. As the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain indicated, at the outset of the debates we have had on metric conversion I also was one of its great supporters, and I believe I still am today. I believe eventually we will go to the metric system. I think eventually we will convert, but I became very turned off in discussions I had in meetings with the Metric Commission.

When we look at these matters, it might be a good idea to go back and read part of the order in council which set up the Metric Commission. The order in council is dated June 10, 1971 and it is order in council No. PC 1971-1146. The order in council accepted a recommendation of the then minister of industry, trade and commerce, pursuant to section 18 of the Government Organization Act, 1969, to establish a preparatory commission for the conversion to the metric system. At that time all parties in the House accepted metric conversion. I believe they accepted it on the basis that in due course we would have a metric bill before the House which would lay