

Petitions

ents a petition disclosing opposition to the mandatory imposition of the SI metric system and favouring a voluntary implementation of the same upon determination by the private sector.

At the same time, I would like specifically to pay tribute to a young man in my riding, a certain Chris Bartolin who, concerned about the way in which the government has behaved, personally paid for an advertisement which gave rise just recently to—

Madam Speaker: Order. Hon. members should limit themselves to the content of the petition.

Mr. Gamble: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton North): Madam Speaker, I, too, rise to present a petition on behalf of the worthy citizens of Edmonton North, who are angry, frustrated and furious that this government would not allow an open debate on metric and would hope that the government would absolve the cost of implementation of this disaster. Therefore, we oppose the mandatory imposition of the SI metric system in Canada, and we believe that the pace, degree and nature of the change to the SI metric should and must be determined voluntarily, in the various sectors of trade and industry, by the individual firms or industries directly concerned, and with minimal government interference. I pray that you will take this into consideration, Madam Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Tousignant: Madam Speaker, I must protest against that gang of hypocrites on the other side of the House who are speaking out against the metric system, while their leader—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. It is time to present petitions, not to debate the question. Hon. members are entitled to present petitions now.

Mr. Olivier: Madam Speaker, I just wanted to know—I gave notice in writing that I intended to raise a question of privilege, and I should be grateful if you would allow me to discuss my question now.

Madam Speaker: The hon. member will be able to discuss his question of privilege after the Chair has dealt with petitions, although questions of privilege do have priority over all other matters in the House. If the hon. member wants to discuss his question of privilege he may do so, since, it is true he has given me notice. The hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Olivier) has the floor.

Mr. Olivier: Madam Speaker, as usual, I am quite willing to co-operate with everyone in this House. I am willing to do so if the Chair gives me the floor after the other members have finished their business.

[English]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Madam Speaker, I am interested in the concern of the members opposite. I am sure that if they put forward a motion or a bill to make illegal the metric measure, they will be very pleased with the debate we would have.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Wilson: Madam Speaker, I am rising to present a petition.

Madam Speaker: That is fine.

Mr. Wilson: Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of thousands of constituents of Etobicoke North, Etobicoke Centre and Etobicoke-Lakeshore who have presented a petition. It is my duty to speak on their behalf, because they oppose the mandatory imposition of the Systems International metric system, particularly those Canadians who have been caught off guard in their shopping recently in buying goods in metric and finding when they got home that they had spent considerably more—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members need not be reminded, I am sure, that the only thing they can do is make a brief statement of the title of the petition, and that is all. They are not to debate it or refer to certain facts that are peculiar to their particular constituency. I would appreciate it, since I have had notices of several petitions being presented, if hon. members would be particularly brief.

Mr. Wilson: Madam Speaker, I will be brief. I believe it is my honoured duty to present this petition on behalf of the constituents of Etobicoke Centre.

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, my petition on behalf of my constituents regarding the mandatory imposition of metric is similar. I only want to say on their behalf that freedom of measure ought to be a measure of freedom.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, I present this petition on behalf of the many thousands of citizens of the electoral district of Red Deer, Alberta, who oppose the mandatory enforcement of SI metric. Prime Minister Pierre is imposing metric. The population finds it hectic. Convert or else—face jail or fine. Drop Imperial, toe the line. My petition is: if yards become meters, at the same time, will Pierres become Peters?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Bruce Halliday (Oxford): Madam Speaker, I rise today, as have many other hon. members, to present a petition