

Adjournment Debate

ing into place, to use her own words, are regulations affecting advertising. Under the new regulations both metric and Imperial are to be used in advertising. This is further explained in an article in the Toronto *Sun* on May 25, 1984, which states, and I quote:

Erola said yesterday Domm was "manufacturing statements" about the new regulations. She claimed there would not be new orders-in-council outlawing the use of Imperial weigh scales.

This means very clearly that the grocers, not only in the Province of Ontario but in all other provinces and territories, have won a great victory. They now have the use of Imperial weigh scales, to use the words of the Minister, in their stores. The only requirement is that they use both metric and Imperial in their advertising. I personally see nothing wrong with that. In fact, I am sure our Party in opposition could endorse very easily the use of both metric and Imperial in advertising until we become more familiar with metric, if that is the route we are to take. What we in the Opposition are objecting to is the mandatory use of metric weigh scales with prosecutions to follow if Imperial continues to be used. That clearly is not the position of the Minister.

What we have now in Canada with respect to metric and Imperial measurements is a clear case where one can use yards, as they are doing across Canada in the advertising of floor covering, and one can use metres if one wishes. That is perfectly permissible in all of Canada. There have been no prosecutions in three years. We now have that extended to the grocery sector where one can use Imperial weigh scales, to use the words of the Minister, and one can use metric weigh scales or you can use either or both. However, they would like you to use metric and Imperial in advertising groceries.

● (1805)

That leaves only the case of gas stations to be resolved. Until those cases are resolved through the appeal court in Ontario, which will be sometime in the fall, it is permissible in Canada to use gallons or litres in the advertising, sale and display of petroleum products at retail establishments. We have voluntary metric in Canada today. We have the right to use Imperial weigh scales or metric weigh scales. We have the right to sell by the yard or the metre. We have the right to sell by gallons or litres. To use the words of the Minister of November 2, 1983, there will be no prosecutions in Canada until we clear away the appeal case. It is safe to put on record that Imperial measurement is now legal in Canada. You can use Imperial weigh scales if you wish. We would just ask that you advertise in both metric and Imperial.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Louis Leduc (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Domm) claimed it was the Minister's intention to ignore the law with respect to Judge Ross's ruling in the Halpert-Christiansen case (*Hansard*, p. 4010, May 24, 1984). As the Hon. Member is no doubt aware, this court case was concerned only with the regulations for the sale of gas and diesel fuel in metric units. On May 14, 1984,

the Minister announced, following many requests from industry and consumer groups, that she had decided to allow the retail sector to indicate prices for goods weighed in both metric and imperial units. In recent months, consumers had trouble comparing market prices, since retailers were not taking a uniform approach. The change in the regulations allows the use of imperial units for the purpose of advertising prices. All food prices must include a reference to metric units, and it is up to the retailer to decide whether he wishes to include imperial units as well, provided that most of the space is given to metric units. The word "scales" is not mentioned, and the Minister made it clear that the change in the regulations applies only to the use of both units simultaneously when indicating prices and in advertising. This decision takes into account the views put forward by the Consumers' Association of Canada and the Retail Council of Canada. Since the Hon. Member attended the conference on the metric system held here in Ottawa, he must have heard more than 200 organizations and private individuals say it was absolutely necessary to make metric conversion a success.

As far as phasing out the Metric Commission is concerned, the decision was made in May 1983, after lengthy consultations with many representatives from various industries, associations and individuals associated with the conversion program. It is a fact that as a result of the work done by the Commission, the provinces, industry and consumers, the program's various phases have practically been completed. There is nothing secret or mysterious about the plan to phase out the Commission. Information on the subject is available from the Commission itself.

I would like to point out that the amounts set aside in the budget for the salaries of the Commission's seven members do not total more than \$156,000, well below the figure of \$270,000 mentioned by the Hon. Member for Peterborough in the House last week. Perhaps he would like to create a benevolent fund to help these unfortunates.

● (1810)

[English]

FINANCE—FUEL TAX PAID BY FARMERS AND FISHERMEN—
REQUEST FOR REMOVAL

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, on May 9, I rose to ask a question of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) regarding the Government's blind determination to continue charging the farmers and fishermen of our country an extra 9 per cent for the cost of fuel in the production of food. I should point out that in addition to that 9 per cent they have to pay a 1.5 cent per gallon excise tax which is refundable, but simply adds an extra burden to the fishermen and farmers. It is an extra burden of paperwork of which they must keep track. It simply adds to the bureaucracy of our land in computing taxes.

Furthermore, I was just informed that the 9 per cent tax will go up another 1 per cent in the fall. As I said to the Minister