

To sum up, I should say that standards emanate, in Canada at least, from a wide variety of agencies and organizations. So there is a possibility that a patchwork quilt of standards, repetitious, if not contradictory, may develop.

Consequently, only close intra-national and international consultation in standards writing helps to ensure the consistency and efficiency that we all want so much.

The need for consistency and co-ordination in Canada, in standards making, is the driving force behind the legislation I have the honour of introducing today.

In view of the fact that the present bill would create a national Canadian entity in this area, let us ask ourselves what should be the characteristics of a national standards organization.

I ask the question once again: since we are trying to establish such a body this afternoon, and perhaps another one tomorrow, what should be the features of a standards organization in Canada?

It should meet the following requirements. First of all, it should be representative of all those groups with major interests in standardization. Broadly speaking, this includes producer and consumer associations, plus government representatives from all levels, since governments are major users of standardized products besides having responsibility to ensure that the broad public interest is taken into account.

The first condition is that this organization should really be representative of all those concerned. The second condition is that it should be able to gain and retain, through the quality of its management, orientation, dynamism and leadership the confidence of industry and the general public.

The third condition is that this organization should be impartial. No group's special interests should be allowed to predominate in the organization. As it was said about Caesar's wife, not only should it be impartial, but it should also give the impression of being so. It seems to me that the most important thing is "to be" impartial, but "to seem to be impartial" is not unimportant either.

The fourth condition is that this organization should have a wide scope of activity and concern, and be prepared to take an interest in all sectors and in all parts of the country, as well as in developments in other countries.

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The fifth condition is that the organization should be energetic, responsive to needs and able to identify new areas of concern, in the light of rapid technological developments and constant increase in the variety of new products placed on the market.

It should also be fully aware of the government policy in the field of industrial development and international trade and be able to develop a fund of information relating to standardization in the country as well as abroad.

That is, Mr. Speaker, the aim of the new Standards Council. The government felt that only such a Council as the one described in the bill could meet all these criteria—or all the standards, if you will allow me this play on words—which I have just mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Bourassa (Mr. Trudel) has told me that he would like to give the history of standardization in Canada as well as in foreign countries, to underline the importance of it.

[*English*]

For my part, I speak now not to the history of the whole field of standardization but to the history of this particular bill, C-163.

In 1966, in view of the growth of Canadian international trade and of the increasing rate of technological change leading to a proliferation of new techniques and products, the federal government thought that a close look should be taken at the development of standards in Canada. A steering committee was established comprising representatives from the federal government and the major private Canadian standards writing agency; that is, of course, the Canadian Standards Association. The purpose of this steering committee was to examine standardization activity in the country and to make recommendations for future action. The federal government and the CSA were equally represented on that steering committee, having six members each.

In July, 1967, the prime minister of the time wrote to each of the provincial premiers inviting them to send representatives to a full federal provincial conference for an exchange of views on the steering committee's proposals. This conference was convened in February, 1968. I am trying to underline, en passant, that we have been at it for four years; this is why I give the whole chronology of events that have taken place. A consensus was reached at that federal provincial conference: a standards council of Canada should be established.