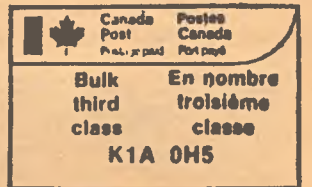


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Metric shopping is here . . .

Nick Victoria is glad his poultry store is switching to metric units to weigh all the good things he sells in Toronto's Kensington Market.

Nick is a colourful, real-life figure in the market known to Canadians

everywhere via Al Waxman's TV show, *King of Kensington*. He says he has been waiting two years to replace his old cylinder scale measuring in imperial pounds and ounces with an efficient digital

machine to record grams and kilograms.

"We've been holding off replacing it until we knew when the change to metric would happen here - and now's the time."

Nick's wait was almost over with news from Metric Commission Canada that his area would switch in Spring 1982 as part of the nationwide change to metric measurement in retail food stores everywhere by the end of 1983.

Pre-packaged foods have been sold in metric units for several years, the Commission says, and now the process will be completed by converting store scales to measure individually weighed items like meat, cheese and vegetables.

Nick's store now has one digital scale to measure food in pounds and ounces, he says, and customers prefer it to the cylinder version. "On the digital scale, they see what they're getting. If I weigh a bird on the cylinder, a customer often says, 'Can I put it on the other scale?' OK, I say. No problem. And so it goes."

Nick knows the new metric digital type of scale will mean faster service and save him a lot of running around.

Nick came to Canada from Portugal in 1972 and he sees metric conversion as a welcome return to a system he grew up with. "I came to Canada when I was 14 and started working in Kensington right away. To tell you the truth, I didn't know what the heck I was doing using pounds and ounces."

But he adjusted quickly and says he's sure his customers who grew up with pounds and ounces will adjust too, as metric comes into use in Canada to conform to the most common standard

worldwide. He plans to make the change as easy as possible for his customers by displaying Metric Commission charts and posters to tell the story.

Kensington Market has a pulse and bustle all its own on busy Saturdays when shoppers and tourists alike come to enjoy the sights, sounds and odors of the place. Some find their way to Sanci's Tropical Fruit Store and maybe are tempted to buy yams, sweet potatoes or pig tails from a wide choice of Indian and Jamaican foods.

For owner Frances Borg, who weighs practically every purchase individually, the metric transition will be easy. "I know what a kilogram is. We've always dealt in kilograms when we import food," she says. "and I know my customers won't have any trouble either. If they do, I'll help them."

All Kensington Market stores will be converting at the same time, including Kaplan's cheese store. Owner Abe Ilutowicz foresees some confusion at first. But he adds, "I expect my customers will get the hang of it fast, especially when they see the value hasn't changed - just the numbers on the scale."

Experience in other places that have already converted indicates he's right. And to make the changeover easier - at Kensington Market and everywhere else in Canada - signs and advertising will show both imperial and metric figures during the conversion period to the end of 1983.



Canapress Photo Service

Three storekeepers in Toronto's colourful Kensington Market get together to demonstrate that "Metric Shopping is Here." It's true - or will be soon - as Canadian food stores convert their scales to weigh food in grams and kilograms. Left to right, the Kensington people are: Abe Ilutowicz, Kaplan's cheese store; Frances Borg, Sanci Tropical Fruit Store; and Nick Victoria, Kensington Meat Packing Company, a frequent guest on the television series, *King of Kensington*.

... and consumers speak out!

Pursuant to the reorganization of federal government departments announced by the Prime Minister 1982-01-12, Metric Commission Canada will be reporting to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MCC offices will be moving to 255 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, at the end of February.

by W.L. Beeman
Assistant Editor

People in 21 cities across Canada began buying store-weighed foods in metric this month and reaction has been largely neutral.

Irene Walker, an Ottawa-area housewife, told the *Monitor* that she had found there was no difference. "I had thought there might be some problems at the deli counter, but there were plenty of posters and everything was very well explained. I didn't even need the metric calculator I got at Christmas. Frankly, I don't see what all the fuss was about."

Randle Wilson, an Ottawa shopper, said that the food stores in his area had not converted yet, but that he looked forward to metric shopping. "I find the metric system much easier," he said. "I would far rather multiply by ten (in metric) than by sixteen (in imperial) to compare prices. Food costs will be much easier to compare in the new system."

Martin Laplante, a student at the University of Ottawa, is also happy

about metric shopping. "I like the standardization," he said. "In fact, I find metric units much easier to visualize. You don't have to multiply and divide with awkward numbers, as you have to in the imperial system."

Denise Coughlan, a partner in an Ottawa management consultants' firm, does not anticipate any problems with metric shopping. "You have to accept change when it comes," she said, "and this change has been pretty gradual. I'm already used to buying milk and sugar in metric."

Reaction in other centres across Canada was similar. The Canadian Press quoted several Western shoppers' divided opinions. In Calgary, fifty-two-year-old Luella Anderson felt that people in her age group would never completely adapt to grams and litres, but in Edmonton, Jane Guy, a former school teacher, was pleased that the metric system had finally been established in Canada.

Reaction in Newfoundland has been especially positive. An editorial in the *St. John's Daily*

News said "there is no good reason why the conversion to metric in retail stores in Newfoundland and Labrador can't be done without any fuss or bother." The article concluded by predicting that Newfoundlanders would

get used to metric with ease and that there would not even be a ripple of complaint or confusion by the time the whole province's conversion is completed at the end of next year.



W.L. Beeman
Scott Henderson of NCR Canada tests a converted electronic balance at an A & P store in Ottawa.

The costs of conversion

In a key speech at the annual conference of the United States Metric Association Inc. (USMA), John Markovich, Director of the Metric Branch of Alberta Government Services, analyzed the estimated versus the actual costs of metric conversion in Canada.

Markovich began his talk at the 1981-10-03 Denver meeting by highlighting the value of using



H. St-Pierre

John P. Markovich

others' experience. The Alberta government was able to use the example of Australia and New Zealand to good advantage, he said, finding that two omnibus bills, the Metric Conversion Statute Amendments Acts of 1976 and 1977, were all that was necessary to change the units of measurements from imperial to metric in all other provincial states.

Markovich then went on to point out the need of getting trade and industry associations involved in the process of metric conversion. "Use government only where you have to, or can take advantage of its research capabilities," he said. "Otherwise, leave it out."

He cited the example of the Alberta Construction Association, a provincial group which coordi-

nates the activities of eight regional associations and represents them to the national body. Early in its research, it discovered that contractors would gain a great deal from conversion, and that the investment involved would be quickly recouped.

"It immediately set up an information service," Markovich continued, "to keep members informed of progress in metric conversion, brought in experts from around the world to hear about the successes or failures of changeover programs in other nations, and developed a number of specific training courses to help their members learn the metric system of measures."

"The association established a very high profile and its training programs were soon in demand right across Canada. The total number of contractors registering exceeded their original estimate by more than 1000%. The result was a build-up of a substantial education fund which has since been re-invested in a number of new education programs for members."

"Many groups in Alberta have followed the Construction Association lead and immediately began preparing their members to utilize metrics, our most efficient measurement system."

"General Motors' metric conversion cost only 10% of the estimate"

Because of the success of this program, many Alberta companies didn't even bother forecasting conversion costs, Markovich said. They just went ahead and converted. Costs were always relatively low. Shell Canada, for instance, found its \$500 000 conversion to be equivalent of one to

two hours' production time per plant.

"However, some Canadian firms did prepare estimates of their conversion costs," Markovich continued. "The Steel Company of Canada, or Stelco, is one of these firms."

"Stelco's experience is:

Stelco Division	Original Estimate	Actual Cost
Operating	\$5.88 million	\$4.60 million
Financial (computer programming, forms)	1.69	1.42
Marketing	0.75	0.55
Fees to industry Task Force	0.15	0.07

"These costs have been spread over the life time of Stelco's conversion program, and although they are significant from a total dollar viewpoint, they represent less than 0.5% of a single year's sales volume. Needless to say, the people at Stelco were pleasantly surprised with the final results."

"I believe that your own General Motors had an even more startling discovery with their conversion. Costing only 10% of the original estimate, GM's experience is right in line with one closer to home for me."

"The Alberta Forest Service forecast a cost of \$70 000 to change over precipitation and windspeed equipment at its weather stations but didn't have this money in its budget. The final sum, however, came to only 1% of the original estimate, or \$700."

"Since 1979-01-01, our Department of Housing and Public Works has put out to public tender some \$500 million to \$600 million in construction projects. Approximately 98% of these projects are of metric design. The other 2% were projects designed in imperial

"The Alberta Forest Service's conversion cost \$700"

prior to M-Day, but tendered after. Some of the department designers were not convinced that renovations in old buildings should be done in metric, and the early restoration projects were designed in imperial. However, since 1980 all government contracts in Alberta have been in

In Quebec

Concrete masonry in metric only

L'Association québécoise des fabricants d'éléments de maçonnerie de béton Inc. (AFEB) has announced that as of 1982-01-01, concrete masonry units will be produced in metric dimensions only.

As a result, masonry units will no longer be available in imperial dimensions as of 1982.

The AFEB and all manufacturers of concrete masonry units in Quebec will be pleased to answer any technical question which should arise. A bulletin on conversion to the metric system is available from the AFEB at the following address (50¢ per copy):

174 Ste-Foy Blvd.
Suite 203
Longueuil
J4J 1W9
Tel. (514) 463-3485

metric design. In all the construction that has taken place, only one area can be pointed out as costing a premium due to the measurement system - metric fluorescent light fixtures. Originally, suppliers of these charged a \$2.00 premium for metric-sized tubes. Today, that premium has dropped to fifty

dispensing drugs in metric measure for many years. The cost will be relatively small. Victoria General Hospital, in Halifax, spent less than \$900 to change to metric. Its only expenditure was the production of conversion tables for both the medical and laboratory staff."

Markovich concluded his speech by encouraging the U.S. Metric Association to publicize its accomplishments more. The American program, he said, was as advanced as that of Canada - except that in Canada, conversion was public knowledge. Because U.S. progress remained relatively unknown, the argument that Canada's conversion was handicapped without U.S. moves in the same direction gained credibility it did not deserve.

The U.S. Metric Association, Inc., is a nonprofit organization, established in 1916 to promote American conversion to the metric system, with the objective of standardizing metric usage worldwide. USMA efforts are supported by the U.S. Administration and Congress. USMA is headquartered in Northridge, California.



To obtain this poster, write to Metric Commission Canada, Box 4000, Ottawa, K1S 5G8.

OPINION

by Fred Loader
The Sault Daily Star

A lot of Canadians are still fighting metric, resisting to the end the inevitable conversion and just making it harder on themselves. And how ridiculous that people should call at this stage for a halt to metric conversion. We'd be stuck in the middle of permanent chaos when it comes to comparing weights and prices between the old imperial measurement and the new metric measures.

Joseph Reid, president of the Canadian Metric Association, pointed this out when he said recently: "The trouble with staying as we are is that we are now at the point of maximum inconvenience for the consumer in the conversion process. The prudent shopper must now carry an electronic calculator into the supermarket in order to compare the price of milk

in litre or two-litre cartons versus the price of milk in three-quart pouches or jugs. The meat products packages by packing houses are labelled in grams only; the meat products weighed by the shop are priced by the pound only.

"The shopper, to make price comparisons, must know the conversion factor between quarts and litres, between pounds and kilograms, and between ounces and grams, as well as that there are 16 ounces in a pound. If we clean up the mess we will only need to know that there are a thousand millilitres in a litre, and a thousand grams in a kilogram."

Now, Mr. Reid, if only we could get people out of their stiffnecked refusal to accept metric and recognize the wisdom of what you're saying.

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Metric Commission Canada

Commission du système métrique Canada

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Canada

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Vancouver Open Meeting

MCC held its fourth open meeting in Vancouver on December 1. Over 30 people took this opportunity to express their concerns, ask questions or learn at first hand about the progress of the nation's metric conversion program.

Two representatives of major B.C. industries had been invited to address the meeting.

Fred Walsh, plywood manager for the Council of Forest Industries of B.C., said that market forces will define the pace of metric conversion. Investigation during planning stages of construction showed that plywood and panel products must be available in sizes compatible with the metric modules adopted for support spacings in housing and other type of construction.

"The Canadian lumber industry has resolved to continue to produce the existing imperial sizes until metric conversion is achieved in the United States" Walsh pointed out. "The U.S. market for softwood is vital for the industry."

"Member mills of the Council of Forest Industries of B.C. have been preparing for metric conversion for some time. However, the physical changeover can't take place overnight. A period of trans-

ition will be necessary," he concluded.

Peter White, chief engineer for Vancouver Wharves Ltd. and representative of MCC's Water Transport Sector, told the meeting that



F. Walsh

the shipping industry is international and that "Canada has to follow the rest of the world".

Already most of the shipping industry has converted to metric,

White said. "Lloyd's Registry of Shipping converted to metric five years ago, charts are in the process of being converted and by 1990 the majority of Canadian charts will be converted."

There are two major areas of concern in water transport, namely the ships and the terminals. "Most ships come and go from various countries and are usually beyond the control of the Water Transport Sector. But the terminals are within the influence of the Sector, and many benefits can be obtained from conversion."

Using deep-sea bulk terminals as an example, he traced the shipment of potash from the mines through the terminal to the purchaser and reviewed the various measurement units and conversions employed in the current system. With the introduction of metric units, shipping is simplified and most of the conversions eliminated.

White also pointed out that 70% of deep-sea ships are now calibrated in metric terms and that the water transport industry operations are predominantly metric, particularly with regard to port, seaway and pilotage charges.

The participants expressed a

wide range of opinions. R. Goldie, a local businessman, suggested that some thought should be given



P. White

by MCC to areas where total metric conversion is not essential. "Housing costs are so high in B.C.," said N. Maccauley, "that first-time buyers don't care whether the houses are metric or imperial." As for J. Micklewright, "conversion to the metric system is the best thing that has ever happened to Canada." Another opinion, expressed by B. Whistler, is that the transition period is quite confusing for the consumer.

The opinions voiced at open meetings are considered not only by MCC Commissioners but also by the specific industry committees who are directly involved with subject matters raised.

MCC's next open meeting will be held in Halifax on 1982-02-03.



Seen above are Bruno Gerussi and Jehane Benoit on their eighteen-city cross-country cooking tours. Gerussi travelled from Victoria to Kingston and Benoit travelled from Ottawa to St. John's. A half-hour video tape, *A Measure Is a Measure*, was distributed to television stations along the way. Press briefings featuring demonstrations of metric cooking were held at each stop.

Look for the green parasol

Shopping Centre	City & Province	Date	Shopping Centre	City & Province	Date
Bedford Plaza	Bedford, N.S.	Feb. 18-20	Jackson Square	Hamilton	Feb. 11-13
Lancaster Mall	Saint John, N.B.	4-6	Mountain Plaza	Hamilton	25-27
McAllister Place	Saint John, N.B.	11-13	Devonshire Mall	Windsor	18-20
Galleries du Cap	Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Que.	11-13	Tecumseh Mall	Tecumseh	11-13
Carrefour	Trois-Rivières, Que.	25-27	Fort Malton Mall	Amherstburg	25-27
Place Bourassa	Montreal	11-13	Burlington Mall	Burlington	4-6
Plaza Côte des Neiges	Montreal	18-20	St. Laurent	Ottawa	4-6
Westmount Square	Montreal	18-20	Shopping Centre 1021 St. Laurent (IGA)	Ottawa	11-13
West Island Mall	Montreal	25-27	50 Beechwood (IGA)	Ottawa	18-20
Centre commercial Fairview	Pointe-Claire	4-6	Napanee Mall	Napanee	4-6
Wilderton Mall	NDG	25-27	Kildonen Place	Winnipeg, Man.	18-20
Galleries Ste-Anne	Gifford	4-6	Deerfoot Mall	Calgary, Alta.	4-6
Place Bourg Royal	Charlesbourg	11-13	Westbrook Mall	Calgary, Alta.	11-13
Stevenson Road S. Dixie & No. 7 Highway	Oshawa, Ont. Brampton/Bromley	18-20 25-27	Leduc Shopping Plaza	Leduc	18-20
Lynden Park Mall	Brantford	4-6	Orchard Park	Kelowna, B.C.	4-6
			Cherry Lane Mall	Penticton	11-13
			Peach Tree Mall	Penticton	25-17
			Harbour Park	Nanaimo	18-20

Metric shopping is here!

Pick up this free pamphlet.

We'll be happy to help you.

Metric Commission Canada / Commission du système métrique Canada

Next MCC Open Meeting 1982-02-03

Nova Scotian Hotel Halifax, N.S. Starts 10:30



Metric information booths are appearing in shopping centres across Canada to help consumers during the scales conversion period.

Metric education



(L to R) Bill Iler, MCC, Irene Dunn, Assistant Director of the Bakery Council of Canada (BCC), Bill Nesbitt, Chairman of the Educational Committee of BCC and Charles W. Tisdall, Managing Director of BCC at the BCC's Toronto offices.

by W.L. Beeman
Assistant Editor

"Our metric education course can be used by just about anybody," said Bill Nesbitt, Chairman of the Educational Committee of the Bakery Council of Canada (BCC) in a recent interview with the *Monitor*.

Developed by BCC in 1978 with assistance from the Canadian Government Office of Tourism (CGOT), the correspondence course was originally designed for

production people in the baking industry. In five concise but comprehensive lessons, students progress from a general introduction to the metric system and SI usage to a discussion of the units used for air pressure, torque, and fuel consumption.

Due to the success of the course, with 170 English and French-speaking graduates and 77 people presently studying, its scope was soon expanded to include office workers. "It doesn't concern itself specifically with baking," says

Nesbitt, "so people outside the industry could also benefit from it".

"We were pleased to get the assistance from CGOT," he continued. "They felt the course would be a benefit to all members of the hospitality industry. We in the Educational Committee of BCC saw that metric conversion was coming, and wanted to prepare people for the change. Now that the conversion date is approaching, there is a renewed interest in the course."

"Yes, there is quite an interest in the course, especially out in the West," continued Irene Gibb, Assistant Director of BCC. "We find people are pretty pro-metric out there. Since it's a correspondence course, we were able to keep the price down - the cost of running classes would have been prohibitive. With a correspondence course, we can cover the whole country, and let students proceed at their own pace."

The metric education course is one of four correspondence programs run by the Educational Committee of BCC. The other three concern bakery technology, occupational health and safety, and sanitation. "We were pleased to see that the Americans were interested in our courses too," said Gibb. "They've picked up our sanitation course."

The Educational Committee, a national leader in industrial educational programs, is only one of the voluntary committees making up the Bakery Council of Canada, a trade association representing 600 wholesale and retail bakers and



Seafood Pie Royale

500 g frozen fish fillets	2 mL salt
250 mL water	1 mL dry mustard
2 mL salt	175 mL table cream
1 bay leaf	250 mL poaching liquid
15 mL lemon juice	25 mL chopped walnuts
75 mL butter	25 mL chopped pimento
25 mL chopped onion	Pastry for 2-crust,
50 mL thinly sliced celery	23 cm pie
75 mL flour	

Place fillets in a large saucepan. Add water, salt, bay leaf and lemon juice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer 6 to 8 min or until fish flakes easily. Drain fish well, reserving 250 mL poaching liquid. Flake fish and cool. Melt butter and sauté onion and celery until tender. Blend in flour, salt and mustard. Gradually add cream and poaching liquid. Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat and stir in walnuts, pimento and fish. Pour into pastry-lined 23 cm (1 L) pie plate; cover with top crust, trim, seal edges and flute. Cut steam vents in top crust. Bake in lower part of the oven at 200°C, 25 to 30 min. Allow pie to stand 15 min before serving.

Makes 6 servings.
(From the leaflet *Canadian Fish... A Good Catch* published by Fisheries and Oceans, Ottawa, K1A 0E6)



suppliers across Canada, more than 70% of the industry.

Those interested in the course, which costs \$40 for BCC members and \$55 for non-members, may write to the Education Department, Bakery Council of Canada, Suite 1101, 130 Bloor St., West, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2X7, or call (416) 964-3250.

Upcoming meetings

DATE	SECTOR	LOCATION
JANUARY		
1982-01-19	Sector 62.05, Frozen Foods	Toronto
1982-01-25	Sector 62.50, Working Group on Packaging	Toronto
1982-01-12	Sector 7.49, Luggage and Leather Goods	Toronto
1982-02-01	Sector 62.03, Meat Packers	Toronto
1982-01-13	Sector 9.30, Services to Business Management	Toronto
1982-01-27	Sector 7.45, Brush, Broom and Mop	Montreal
1982-01-28	Sector 9.10, Provincial Sub Committee Health and Welfare	Ottawa
1982-01-29	Sector 9.10, Health and Welfare	Ottawa
FEBRUARY		
1982-02-04	Sector 7.30, Leather (Footwear)	Montreal
1982-02-09	Sector 61.03, Poultry	Toronto
1982-02-10/11	Sector 10.03, Post-Secondary Non-University Education	Victoria
ACIP MEETING		
1982-02-02		Halifax
MCC MEETING		
1982-02-03/04	67th Meeting	Halifax

Scales conversion schedules

Retail food scales conversion schedules have been prepared by over 400 representatives of the retail food industry, the scale industry and consumers, in 19 District Committees across Canada, to achieve a coordinated conversion that can be carried out as speedily as possible while keeping any inconvenience and expense associated with the conversion to a minimum.

There is a coordinated schedule for each district, which is available from MCC, scale suppliers, wholesalers or associations. MCC has mailed a copy of the appropriate schedule to all food retailers across Canada.

People in the following cities will be buying their food in metric in March 1982:

March 1
Hope, Lillooet
Scarborough
Mississauga
Cochrane, Timmins, Hearst

March 8
Ile Jésus, St. Leonard, Cartierville
in Metropolitan Montreal



NEW PUBLICATIONS

Metric Method of Measurement of Construction Works

The Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors recently announced the publication of the fifth edition of its *Metric Method of Measurement of Construction Works*. This latest publication incorporates the previous separate publication known as *Measurement of Buildings by Area & Volume*.

The chief object of this document is to promote a method of measurement of building works that may be used for teaching quantity surveying across the country. It also enables a method of measurement to be made available for incorporation into contract documents which call for the calculation of the cost of building works by the unit pricing of measured quantities of materials and labour.

As a reference document, the *Method of Measurement* is an aid to architects, consulting engineers, specification writers, cost engineers and construction arbitrators, and has been used as

evidence in construction arbitration proceedings.

Copies are available upon application to the Canadian Institute of Quantity Surveyors, 43 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 704A, Toronto, Ontario, M4P 1A2 at a price of \$26.00 per copy (\$21.00 for students). Prepayment is required.

For further information, contact: Mrs. Lois Metcalfe, Executive Director (416) 485-4850.

The Modernized Metric System Made Simple

Metric Commission Canada has granted use of the National Symbol for Metric Conversion to *The Modernized Metric System Made Simple* by J.A.M. Gaboury. The booklet shows how to solve metric problems easily, efficiently, and accurately, and is available from:

J.A.M. Gaboury
P.O. Box 24
Station "B"
Montreal, Quebec
H3B 3J5

Conversion in the United States

Every year at the Metric Commission Canada staff conference a prominent figure is invited to address MCC personnel on some aspect of metric conversion. This year's keynote speaker was David Gorin, President of the American National Metric Council (ANMC), who spoke on the progress of metric conversion in the United States. The text of his speech follows.

I know that many of you, and many members of your sector committees, have expressed impatience, and even some unhappiness, over the pace of metric conversion in the United States. I wish I could stand here before you today and tell you that the foot-dragging is over, that the government is taking hold of the issue, that industry has woken up to the facts of life and that all will be well in a metric USA in just a few short years. I wish I could tell you that, but I would only be fooling you and deluding myself. But the picture is not entirely black and there are some encouraging signs on the horizons. I have some good news and some bad news.

First, the bad news. The US will not be predominantly metric in the next five years; nor will it be predominantly metric in the next ten years.

Now, for the good news. There is a growing sentiment within the American National Metric Council, and, for that matter, throughout the country, that recognizes the reality and eventuality of the US becoming a predominantly metric nation. This sentiment is now being expressed by many who formerly refused to acknowledge the relentless march of the rest of the world towards SI. This concept of inevitability is a major change in

"A growing sentiment recognizes the reality of the US becoming predominantly metric"

attitude of many Americans. I hope that the program of the ANMC will evolve into one that gives a greater recognition to this change in outlook and attitude and that there will be a new set of marching orders which recognize for the first time that the tide really is coming in on American shores and will not disappear. This would be a drastic change from the current status of ANMC and the US metric program.

I would like to focus my remarks this morning on helping you to understand a bit more about why the US is having such a difficult time addressing the transition to metric. I think that you ought to know what the hindrances are so that you can better appreciate the significance of the small progressive steps that are made, in light of the difficulties.

In reviewing status, let me just say here that it is slow, no doubt, but that it is also very steady. Metric is moving ahead, but don't look for any major breakthroughs. Let's turn now to the hindrances and try to keep in mind that all progress, however small and slow, is made in spite of them.

First and foremost, the resistance to change, the fear of the unknown and the emotional involvements of Americans toward things American present an overwhelmingly difficult obstacle. Now, you can say that every country that undergoes any change must overcome this very basic problem. And you're right. But the US circumstances today are different. The size of the American population, some 230 million people, and their diversity are extremely difficult to deal with.

Studies have shown that when people know SI they adapt to it much more quickly. Well, the cost of educating and informing such a large population is very high and takes considerable time. Until a more receptive climate is developed, the fear and natural tendency to resist change cannot be overcome. I needn't tell you that the present administration in Washington is not likely to put out the dollars required to change American attitudes toward metric. Therefore, the job must be done by the private sector – and it will be done that way, but only when the private sector sees a payoff.

I must also point out that resistance comes not only from what is often disparagingly referred to as "Middle America" but really from all walks of life. In fact, our first obstacle is public resistance.

Now, before I go on, let me categorically state that at this time and for the foreseeable future there will be no federal government mandate to convert to metric. Therefore, that device will not be used to overcome public resistance.

The second hindrance relates to what I've just said. While no government mandate is likely, the same people who oppose mandating metric would like a clarification of the commitment of the federal government. Without government interest and support of voluntary conversion, without a clear Administration position, industry is reluctant to act. One of the strange anomalies of American business is its desire to be unregulated and unencumbered by government, but, at the same time, its seeming inability to face new issues without government's involvement or interest. Furthermore, the federal government's intentions have been increasingly muddled now by the Reagan attempt to eliminate the US Metric Board. The lack of the Reagan policy on metric combined with this move is sending very negative signals to American business. A clear statement by the White House on its metric policy is necessary; ANMC is presently cooperating with the appropriate officials to try to obtain such a

"Our first obstacle is public resistance"

statement. Mind you, the statement might be negative, but having no statement at all has an almost equally bad effect.

Moving on, let's talk for a moment about legal impediments. The USMB has studied this issue and so far maintains that there are no legal barriers to conversion – and this includes antitrust barriers. Now, some companies tell us that there are legal impediments found in laws on the national, state and local levels as well as in federal regulations. Someone is obviously wrong here. Either there are barriers or there aren't. In my judgment, most of the barriers, if not all, are perceived rather than actual. And, as long as business perceives them, there is a problem. Here, too, education is needed and government involvement is required to address the issue. By the way, there is at least one major legal barrier of which



ANMC President David Gorin

I'm aware, and that is a regulation of the Federal Trade Commission that deals with measurement labels on consumer packages – a very important rule that prohibits metric-only labels and effectively serves to prohibit any manufacturer from using his product as a valuable awareness device.

The general economic picture in the US presents both a hindrance and an opportunity.

On the hindrance side, given the current state of the economy, business is reluctant, and rightly so, to undertake any changes in operations whose results are uncertain. The economic impact of conversion is unclear; some say that it will cost billions and some say it will pay for itself; some say it will open new doors in international trade and others say it has no impact on our ability to trade around the world. Studies in this area are inconclusive, and I believe that the questions will only be resolved through actual experience rather than academic study. When enough companies have had sufficient experience, we may then have data which will be persuasive.

On the positive economic side, the Administration has taken steps which will encourage increased use of SI. Tax incentives and other steps toward reindustrialization will lead to major plant renovations and machinery updating. I

have no doubt that this rebuilding of American industry will include the building of plants and equipment with metric capability.

Let me now turn to two other hindrances and mention them briefly.

First, no practical solution has yet been found for the perplexing chicken-and-egg syndrome. Manufacturers would produce metric products if the customers would ask for them; customers would ask for them, if they were available. This vicious circle is a major

"Most of the barriers are perceived rather than actual"

obstacle to progress and some creative thinking must be applied to deal with the problem. One answer would obviously be the use of the government's purchasing power to break the cycle. At the moment, this is an unacceptable solution.

Secondly, and last of my litany of excuses, is the absolute refusal and reluctance of private sector companies to take a leadership role. Until key companies from within each industry assume leadership, and as long as they continue to look to government for leadership, the stalemate will con-

tinue. I believe, and ANMC believes, that leadership belongs to the private sector.

I realize that many of you would like to offer advice on how to overcome these hindrances. These obstacles were and are being faced here in Canada and you have dealt with them. We certainly appreciate your experiences and can learn from them. I recently wrote an editorial in our *Metric Reporter* on just that subject.

Now that I have given you the bad news – or most of it – let me turn to the better news. Here are some of the recent developments that are encouraging to those of us who toil daily in the metric vineyards:

1. A *Small Business Planning Guide* on metric conversion prepared by the ANMC has been funded by the federal Small Business Administration, which will ensure wide distribution.
2. The first two complete sector plans – Industrial and Chemical & Allied Products – have been endorsed by ANMC and sent to the US Metric Board.
3. The Standards task group is now working to prioritize the changeover of American standards so that it will take place as efficiently as possible.
4. New sector committees have been formed in the sectors of Data Processing/Office Equipment, Water Resources, and Medical & Health – nine in Medical & Health alone.
5. The Ryerson Steel Service Center hosted a meeting of four sector committees to continue developing a preferred list of steel sizes.
6. The Chemical Sector Committee held a symposium to examine how to convert titanium dioxide.
7. The theme of the upcoming ANMC conference, for the first time ever, is metric inevitability – and there hasn't even been any negative reaction to our position paper.

Electric Power Sector



Sector Committee 3.06, Electric Power, held its 34th meeting in Vancouver 1981-09-24 to discuss in depth the sector plan end event. The Committee unanimously agreed that the Electric Power Sector had achieved its specific objectives as outlined in the Sector Plan. Subsequently the request for standing down by Sector Committee 3.06 was recommended by Steering Committee 3 and was approved by Metric Commission Canada. (Sitting from l. to r.) A. Tingley, Canadian General Electric Co. Ltd.; M. Mersereau, New Brunswick Power Commission; W. Olinoski, Vice-Chairman; J. Campbell, Saskatchewan Power Corporation; R. Saxena, MCC; D. Darby, TransAlta Utilities Corporation; G. King, Nova Scotia Corporation. (Standing from l. to r.) H. Pelletier, Hydro-Quebec; D. Rossi, TransAlta Utilities Corporation; G. Seropian, MCC; I. Clark, Canadian Electrical Association; B. Dreyer, MCC; L. Frankenberger, Manitoba Hydro; J. Coblentz, B.C. Hydro & Power Authority. Members in absentia: G.M. Dlugosch, Newfoundland & Labrador Hydro; M. Robinson, Canadian Standards Association.