


Greetings from the White House

A letter from The White House greeted members and guests of the American National Metric Council at their tenth annual conference held in Washington, D.C. in May 1984.

"You have my best wishes for a successful Conference," wrote President Ronald Reagan.

"As I have said before, metric use is important to America's ability to compete in the world trade arena. As the economy enters a solid, lasting expansion, the opportunities associated with metric use are becoming more prevalent.

"In addition, the recent report by the Task Force on Education and Economic Growth observed that the ability to make and use measurements in both traditional and metric units is a basic skill needed by today's student for employment. The summer Olympics in Los Angeles will expose the American public to metric measures since all international sports events are measured in metric units.

"These activities in industry, education, and sports demonstrate the growing metric use in the U.S. economy." 

The XXIII Olympiad Gold, Silver and Bronze

For 16 glorious days, July 28 through August 12, 7800 athletes from 140 countries reached for the ultimate and presented the world with a spectacular Olympiad.

Alex Sasha Baumann, swimmer from Sudbury, carrying Canada's Colours, led our 438-member team into Los Angeles coliseum. They proudly marched out, jubilant, with 44 medals — 10 Gold, 18 Silver, 16 Bronze:

GOLD

Anne Ottenbrite, Whitby
200 m breaststroke.

Linda Thom, Ottawa
women's sports-pistol

Alex Baumann, Sudbury
swimming, 400 m individual medley, 200 m individual medley — world record 2:01.42

Victor Davis, Waterloo
200 m breaststroke

Pat Turner, Vancouver
Kevin Neufeld, St. Catharines
Mark Evans, Toronto
Grant Main, Welland
Paul Steele, Vancouver
Mike Evans, Toronto
Dean Crawford, Victoria
Blair Horn, Kelowna
rowing, heavy eights, 2 000 m

Sylvie Bernier, Ste. Foy, women's
surfboard, 3 m

Larry Cain, Oakville
canoeing, men's Canadian — 1 500 m

Lori Fung, Vancouver
rhythmic gymnastics, women's all-around

Hugh Fisher, Burnaby
Alwyn Morris, Caughnawaga
Kayak-2, 1 000 m

SILVER

Victor Davis, Waterloo
100 m breaststroke

Curt Harnett, Thunder Bay
sprint cycling, 1 km time

Anne Ottenbrite, Whitby
100 m breaststroke

Jacques Demers, Brossard
middleweight weightlifting

Mike West,
Victor Davis, Waterloo
Tom Ponting, Calgary
Sandy Goss, Toronto
Swimming, 4 x 100 m medley relay.

Betty Craig, Brockville
Tricia Smith, Vancouver
rowing — pair-oars without coxswain, 1 000 m

Marilyn Brain, Victoria
Angie Schneider, Rodney
Barbara Armbrust,
St. Catharines
Jane Tregunno, St. Catharines
Lesley Thompson, Napanee
rowing, four oars with coxswain, 1 000 m

Sharon Hambrook,
Kelly Kryczka, Calgary
synchronized swimming

Alexandra Barre, Ste. Foy
Sue Holloway, Ottawa
women's kayak-2, 500 m

Bob Molle, Saskatoon
heavyweight wrestling

Larry Cain, Oakville
canoeing, Canadian-1, 1 000 m

Shawn O'Sullivan, Toronto
light middleweight boxing

Willie deWit, Grande Prairie
heavyweight boxing

Marita Payne, Concord
Angela Bailey,
Angella Taylor, Toronto
France Gareau, Verner
women's 4 x 100 m medley relay

Marita Payne,
Charmaine Crooks,
Molly Killingbeck, Toronto
Jillian Richardson, Calgary
athletics, women's 4 x 400 m relay

Steve Bauer, Fenwick
cycling, 190 km road race

Terry McLaughlin, Toronto
Evert Bastet, Hudson
yachting, Flying Dutchman class

Carolyn Waldo, Beaconsfield
synchronized swimming

BRONZE

Mike West, Waterloo
100 m backstroke

Anne Ottenbrite, Whitby
Michelle MacPherson, Toronto
Reema Abdo, Belleville
Pam Rai, Delta
4 x 100 m medley relay

Daniele Laumann,
Silken Laumann, Mississauga
rowing, double sculls, 1 000 m

Ben Johnson, Toronto
100 m sprint

Robert Mills, Dartmouth
rowing, single sculls, 2 000 m

Doug Hamilton, Toronto
Mike Hughes, St. Catharines
Phil Monckton,
Bruce Ford, Vancouver
rowing, quad sculls, 2 000 m

Terry Neilson, Toronto
yachting, Finn class

Hans Fogh,
Steve Calder,
John Kerr, Toronto
yachting, Soling class

Dale Walters, Burnaby
bantamweight boxing

Hugh Fisher, Burnaby
Alwyn Morris, Caughnawaga
men's kayak-2, 500 m


Lynn Williams, Vancouver
women's 3 000 m run

Mark Berger, Winnipeg
judo, 95 plus kg class

Cameron Henning, Edmonton
200 m backstroke

Chris Rinke, Coquitlam
freestyle wrestling, 82 kg class

Ben Johnson,
Tony Sharpe,
Desai Williams,
Sterling Hinds, Toronto
men's 4 x 100 m relay

Sue Holloway, Ottawa
Alexandra Barre, Ste. Foy
Luci Guay, Montreal
Barb Olmsted, North Bay
kayak-4, 500 m 

Some Interesting Facts About the Heart


The average heart is 15 cm across, about the size of your fist, and weighs about 0.4 kg.

The heart beats continuously, 70 times/min on the average, with a half-second rest between the beats. Highly trained athletes may have resting heart rates of less than 40 beats/min. The lowest ever recorded was 28 beats/min.

About 70 mL of blood are expelled by the heart on each beat. In athletes that may go up to 150 mL.

At rest, the heart pumps 5 L/min of blood. During intense activity it may pump up to 30 L/min.

In a lifetime the heart beats over 2 500 000 000 times and expels over 170 000 000 L of blood.

A reduction in the resting heart rate of 10 beats/min means a saving of 18¹/₄ whole days of work for the heart over the course of a year. 



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HARBOUR CHARGES:

Port and harbour charges levied by Ports Canada and charges on The St. Lawrence Seaway are based on metric units.

An Economist Learns Metric

Canada has been advancing towards metric conversion for over ten years, yet many Canadians still have problems with the system.


An economist, a delegate at a recent Canadian conference on international marketing, analyzed his own introduction to metric conversion.

"My first introduction to metric took place some fifteen years ago, when I was transferred to Europe as part of a work reorganization program. At first, there was pleasant anticipation of learning a new (to me) system of measurement. This enthusiasm lasted a full three weeks before I became hopelessly confused trying to compare one inch to 2.540 cm, or a pint of milk to 0.568 L.

"In sheer frustration I continued to try and teach myself through comparison, and eventually became a candidate for the psychiatric couch.

"Finally the reality of the situation dawned on me. I was trying to involve a process that compares oranges with bananas. Once I had accepted this fact, metric became a simple matter and I eventually became something of a celebrity among my Swiss colleagues, i.e. someone who could calculate in both measurement systems at the drop of a hat.

"It was interesting to find that my Swiss co-workers, in trying to master imperial measurement, experienced the same problems. In my case it was not difficult to multiply by units of ten once the reality of no comparison had been accepted, but for them, learning the imperial system involved an incredible feat of illogical interpretation.

"Needless to say I have not forgotten my imperial calculus, and never will. I have simply added a further dimension to my ability, much in the same way that one learns a second language without forgetting one's native tongue." 

Canada Exports to China

Mr. Yunzhang Cao, Commercial Counsellor of The Embassy of The People's Republic of China, has invited Canadian businessmen to participate in China's great "modernization drive".

"Friends," said Mr. Cao, speaking to Toronto exporters, "China's construction and technical renovation will be unprecedented in scale, and foreign partners can expect opportunities of wide range.

"China and Canada are friendly countries," continued Cao. "Our wheat trade dates back to the early 60s and since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1970 our trade volume has been on the constant increase. A new historic record of 1.85 billion Canadian dollars was set in 1983. That is 10.5 times higher than that of 1970. China has now become Canada's fifth largest export market."


To put the magnitude of trade potential in perspective, Cao described a burgeoning nation.

"The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1986-1990) is in the making. On the Three Gorges of the Changjian (Yangze) River we will start building an extra large project — several large nuclear power stations and many small and medium-sized conventional power stations. We will speed up the recovery of onshore oil and the development of offshore oil. We will upgrade existing railroads and harbours and build heavy trunk railway lines. We will reform traditional industries and develop new industries such as electronics technology.

"China's modernization drive requires us to open up to the outside world and expand economic and technical exchanges. To carry out this national policy, the Chinese Government has decided that fourteen more coastal cities and Hainan Island will be opened up. These cities will be given greater decision-making power. Foreign businessmen are welcomed to establish exclusive foreign-invested enterprises, joint ventures or cooperative production . . . Import priorities will be given to advanced technology which could be used in China.

"Canada has advanced technology and equipment in mining, energy resources and communications. These could be useful to our economic construction."

Mr. Cao gave this assurance to Canadian exporters: "Our policy of activating the domestic economy and opening the door to the outside world is not a makeshift. The Chinese Government has deliberately drawn up this policy . . . a policy aimed at speeding up our national economic construction. It meets the benefits of our one billion people and obtains support from them. It will remain unchanged with any change of leader."

Foreign trade in China is conducted solely in metric. China has had a metric conversion policy since 1978. By 1987, its economic and industrial sectors will have converted. And by 1990 the nation expects to be totally metric. 

Drivers prefer litres in Edmonton


(The following is reprinted from the Edmonton Journal)

Drivers prefer to fill their tanks with litres of gas, not gallons, says an independent gas station owner who returned to the imperial measure for a month.

Peter Land, co-owner of Land's Happy Mart, recently switched all his pumps back to metric after having pumps at three of his eight

stations calibrated in gallons since January.

"We went back to metric from imperial because of the fact that most of our customers want it that way," Land said this week. "We had more complaints . . . Some of our regular customers got irate."

Ruth Wood, president of the Edmonton branch of the Consumers' Association of Canada, said Land's experience shows consumers are now used to buying gas in litres. 

Metric an asset for executives


Mr. Guy de Puyjalon, president of Exekor Consultants Ltd. Montreal, a national executive relocation company, believes that the application of the metric system to Canadian business can only enhance the opportunities for growth and an eventual return to full employment as we expand our overseas markets.

"In today's world", said de Puyjalon, "we can not relocate an export executive unless he or she is competent with the metric system of measurement. The same situation applies if we are relocating a specialized engineer or some other direct commercial discipline."

De Puyjalon went on to say that an increasing number of people who pass through his relocation procedure are conscious of the need to understand and use metric calculations.

"In consequence, we encourage them to pursue this objective on the principle that it will be one further asset enabling them to find a new and rewarding employment situation.

"Resistance to change is a natural attitude, whether it be in terms of finding a new job or acquiring a new method of calculation. Patience and gradual persuasion are the best methods of instilling confidence. We use these techniques of beneficial persuasion to enable our clients to fully understand and recognize their potential. Once you have achieved this, the rest is clear sailing.

"I would suggest that this is the same policy that should be applied to the task of persuading Canadians to use the metric system. There can be little doubt that it is beneficial, and certainly helpful, in terms of relating to a major section of the world's business and trade interests. 

Electronic company creates overseas market


Pylon Electronic Development Company Ltd. has branches in Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa. The Ottawa plant specializes in electronic instrumentation and has recently developed a new line of radiation monitors and calibration standards. Pylon maintains an international profile and operates a very active Research and Development division.

The Ottawa branch, which is also the head office, exports its products on a world wide basis, including Europe, Central and South America, China, the US and Asia. This is quite an achievement for a relatively new high tech entry in this specialized field. When asked for key ingredients for this success, the president, Mr. John E. Pinnell, gave two requirements:

"The first and foremost task is to produce literature that reflects an international view. Metric specifications are essential. However, the situation is complicated by a segment of people who still prefer the imperial system. The only solution is to provide for both.

"Because of our determination to create a sound overseas market for all our product lines, we have been utilizing the metric system since the company was incorporated in 1955.

"The second requirement is to ensure that a product is compatible with commercial power available to the customer, which can vary from country to country. You would be surprised how many would-be exporters fail to understand this requirement."

As a parting shot, Pinnell pointed out that it is the customer in the end who has to be satisfied. If one keeps this in mind, it seems exporting is not all that difficult. 

Northern Ireland trades in SI


Mr. Louis Ritchie, the Canadian director of the Northern Ireland Industrial Development Board, is convinced that the application of the metric system throughout the UK has been of direct benefit to the increase in overseas trade for Northern Ireland.

In a recent interview, he stated that not only manufacturing had benefitted, but export services in the field of civil engineering and architectural design had also increased, particularly in respect to European Economic Community trade.

Northern Ireland is almost unique in its overall trading advantages. It has modern freight handling facilities, ultramodern manufacturing and service plants, and a record of exceptionally good industrial relations which have achieved a high level of productivity throughout all of its business activities.

The conversion to metric enabled its excess pool of skilled labour to be utilized on export projects throughout Western Europe and the Commonwealth.

Ritchie also commented on the advantageous effect that metric conversion and the introduction of a decimal system has had in the field of banking. With the financial incentives currently being offered through the Industrial Development Board, which are the best in the EEC, conversion to metric has enabled European venture capital to be fully utilized for new business development.

"You have to move with the times," stated Ritchie. "We have to expand our industrial and commercial base to stay in the competitive world of today. Metric is certainly helping us achieve this objective." 

TRADE WITH SINGAPORE:

Metrication began in Singapore in 1971, and by the end of 1980, more than 75 per cent of the industrial sector

had converted to the use of SI units. All trade documents must include declarations in SI units.