

You are correct in that it did not get approved here. I believe that we continued to support the idea of such a study. Whether or not there are plans to reintroduce the idea, the proposal in this session, I am frankly not aware, but I will be glad to comment on that subsequently.

Representative RUMSFELD. I think that very likely this ties into this question of trade.

Mr. TROWBRIDGE. Yes, it does.

Representative RUMSFELD. I think it has a bearing on it, and I am further of the opinion that the fact that Congress has not specifically requested such a study should be no inhibition or prohibition on the Department of Commerce to undertake a study on the possible advantages or disadvantages of U.S. use of the metric system. At least a better understanding of what advantages or disadvantages might accrue to this country as a result of such a study. I would hope the Department would take a good look at it.

Mr. TROWBRIDGE. We certainly will.

(The following statement was later submitted for the record:)

THE METRIC SYSTEM AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Department of Commerce has consistently supported the various bills that have been before the 87th, 88th, and 89th Congresses to authorize a comprehensive study of the advantages and disadvantages of increased use of the metric system of measurement in the United States. While the Department has not proposed such legislation, it strongly favors the enactment of appropriate bills for this purpose such as S. 441, recently introduced in the 90th Congress by Senator Clairborne Pell, and H.R. 3136, introduced by Congressman George P. Miller.

During the 89th Congress, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Science and Technology discussed the many important needs for a metric system study when appearing before the Senate Committee on Commerce on July 14, 1965, in support of S. 774. Similar testimony was presented to the House Committee on Science and Astronautics on August 2, 1965, when that committee held hearings on H.R. 2626 which was superseded by H.R. 10329.

On these occasions, special attention was directed to the pressing need for a better understanding of the extent to which disparities in systems of measurement between the United States and metric-using countries may constitute a barrier to our international trade. It was emphasized that there has been an increasing trend over the last few years in various other countries not only to make the metric system their legal system of measurement, but to prohibit the use of any other system. The announcement of May 25, 1965, by the British Board of Trade of that country's intention to adopt the metric system was cited as a particularly significant development in this general trend which may have an important effect upon American industry and our foreign commerce.

The Assistant Secretary also stressed our general lack of factual information needed to guide decisions in both Government and private sectors concerning increased use of the metric system in this country. Our limited understanding of the interaction between measurement systems and the increasingly important international product standards, which establish preferred sizes, shapes, and other physical characteristics of the articles of international commerce, was noted as one example of the many complex problems that should be investigated.

The Department of Commerce is fully convinced of the need for a broad and comprehensive study of this subject to be initiated as soon as possible. We currently are considering various means to assist and encourage industry toward voluntary self-examination with respect to some of these matters. Such activities by the Department might help to increase the awareness of American business and industry to the problems posed by the increasing world-wide use of the metric system, and might help to identify voluntary actions that can be taken in various industrial areas to adjust to this trend.

We strongly believe, however, that our national interest requires a much broader study of this very complex problem to produce factual information for