

*Car Emission Controls*

report in June of 1984 that the reports for the Department of the Environment itself were produced considerably behind schedule.

• (1720)

Then, as the Hon. Member no doubt recalls better than most of us, the previous Government belatedly recognized the diversity of the groups which were directly and indirectly concerned in this very vital question. The medical professions and private industry both had something to say on the issue and decided that their wishes should be heard. However, that Government's notion of consultation was rather radically different from that which has since been introduced by the present Government. The previous Minister of Transport planned for each group to present its views to a panel of officials behind closed doors. No group could hear the other's arguments, nor could they defend themselves. One of the most important of the groups, the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain, expressed its outrage at this mockery of the consultation process and refused even to attend the so-called hearings, although it had previously submitted significant amounts of basic information and comments.

One of the first actions of the present Minister of Transport was to move to rectify this problem, by inviting representations of interest groups at completely open and public hearings. These were duly held at the beginning of December last. Submissions were received from some 30 individuals and associations. The proceedings were open to the media and were transcribed verbatim. Such transcripts now form part of the public record. Many of those making submissions, particularly the associations representing concerned citizens, welcomed with enthusiasm this innovative injection of open consultation into the policy-making process.

An important part of any discussion, Mr. Speaker, about imposing more stringent limits on automotive exhaust emissions, is to understand the difference in regulatory authority for automobiles and fuels and the combustion process which occurs in the engines of cars. The Hon. Member for Davenport has touched on this in brief, and so will I. Gasoline produces heat and pressure on ignition in an internal combustion engine, as well as waste products such as unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides. The volumes of these waste products emitted by the engines depends, of course, on the efficiency of that very combustion process. The complete combustion in internal combustion engines, if it could be achieved economically, would reduce the exhaust products to relatively harmless carbon dioxide and water. State of the art emission control technology is now designed to control electronically the efficiency of the combustion process in the engine.

Transport Canada's road safety and motor vehicle regulation branch in Ottawa has prescribed exhaust emission standards. The Governor in Council, under the authority of the Clean Air Act, on advice from the Minister of the Environment, also can prescribe standards for fuels and regulate the

maximum concentration of any fuel additives which may be injurious to personal health.

The emission standards imposed some 10 years ago, in January 1975, limit exhaust emissions of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides. Since 1975, motor vehicle manufacturers have found that the most practical way of meeting Canadian emission standards has been through relatively simple catalytic converters in automotive exhaust systems. Provisions are made in catalytic converter equipped cars to ensure the vehicles use only lead-free gasoline. We all know that prolonged use of leaded gasoline will poison the catalysts themselves and render them somewhat useless. As new models of automobiles have been introduced in Canada over the years, an increasing number have burned unleaded fuel, and it is interesting to note that probably some time next year 90 per cent of the motor vehicles on our highways will in fact be burning unleaded fuels.

I would like to deal for a moment, Mr. Speaker, with those who made submissions at the public consultations and suggest that they represented all sides of this very complex issue. The diversity of their interests shows very clearly just how important the issue is and how strongly held are the opinions with respect to it. Submissions came from groups of citizens who are concerned about environmental pollution, such as STOP, an environmental organization based in Montreal; Friends of the Earth, a national and international organization; and, of course, the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain. Each of these groups raised their concerns about the health effects of automobile exhaust emissions, particularly in cities. The Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain also submitted its concerns about the contribution of those emissions to acid rain, and demonstrated the breadth of interest by collaborating in its coalition with individual submissions from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Tourism Ontario, the United Auto Workers and the United Church of Canada.

Advice on the particular implications of the issue for the health of children was given by the Canadian Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, and by the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. Both of these bodies drew attention in their submissions to the vulnerability of children to health impairment from excessive exposure to exhaust gases and to residual lead from leaded gasoline.

Three Hon. Members of this House made personal representations at the hearing: the Hon. Member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling), the Hon. Member for Davenport, and the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie). A municipal government representative, the Mayor of the District Municipality of Muskoka, brought to the hearings the opinions of her constituents in one of the areas of Canada most affected by the threat from acid rain. Two academic scientists, public-spirited atmospheric chemists, also presented evidence on their own behalf, attempting to offer the Government an impartial and independent assessment of some of the complex issue of the chemistry of air pollution and acid rain formation.

Finally, the interests of Canadians as consumers were also represented by the Canadian Automobile Association. That