

as introducing a feature into a vehicle without cost, and the more we have tinkered with requirements, the more costly it has been.

Some brainstorms have hit some legislatures in North America with regard to so-called safety standards, and legislation has been passed. Perhaps everybody was out golfing and there were only a handful of interested people around, much like this afternoon, who pushed something through in the urgency of their consideration. The net result is that when they wake up on Monday morning they realize what they have done, and the whole thing is impractical. It must be remembered that all of those so-called safety standards do cost, and who pays for them? The consumer. When designing regulations there is a tendency on the part of bureaucrats to think that those regulations are for the benefit of the public. Certainly they are for the benefit of the public, but not for the benefit of the public's purse.

Bill C-16, Bill C-42, and other proposals not only from this year but from prior years have all resulted in massive cost increases which are borne by the public, and we are not sure those measures actually meet the safety needs because there are so many accidents which result from the misuse and abuse of vehicles. There is no such thing as making a vehicle safe for the fool, and not only for the fool but also for the person who deliberately misuses machines and equipment. I think reasonableness has to be introduced into all of these standards. I am not saying these things with particular respect to what the minister proposes here.

In considering the guidelines we want to impose with regard to motor vehicle safety I would be one of the first to say that manufacturers must be careful. However, as careful as they might be, there will be many recalls for the purpose of replacing certain equipment. Perhaps we should err on the side of safety, but there have been accidents which were caused by lack of caution, by mental fatigue or mental failure. It is only by the continued misuse of certain equipment that there may be breakdowns. Bearing that in mind, I hope we are not going to impose standards which will cause totally unnecessary costs to the manufacturers of equipment, particularly automobiles, whether they be produced domestically or whether they come from abroad. Those are matters that we also have to consider because everyone has a bottom line figure for the cost of their living each year.

● (1540)

**Mr. Smith (Churchill):** Mr. Chairman, I should like to comment briefly on the standards set for snowmobiles. In the last ten years these machines have become the main means of transportation in northern Canada in a quite revolutionary manner.

We have seen many models come into the north and some do not meet our safety standards. This has led to numerous accidents. Some manufacturers may regard these as pleasure vehicles but that is not the case in the north where 75 per cent or 80 per cent are working vehicles. The vehicles used by hunters and trappers need not have standards as restrictive as

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those imposed on racing vehicles, but there should be a reasonable standard. We do not have snow removal service for the roads in northern communities so nearly every family has a snowmobile. Dog teams are a thing of the past. An exceptionally high standard imposed on working snowmobiles would cause economic hardship for trappers and fishermen.

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to assure hon. members that just as we have been having very good co-operation and consultation with the provinces, so we have with manufacturers. I agree that we need to know the cost of changes and additions. This is a general problem with regulations, and I am stressing it with the department and warning them to take it into consideration.

**Mr. Grafftey:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to rectify what I think is a public misconception based on industry misrepresentation. Motor vehicle research in the United States, corroborated by good research in Canada, has consistently shown that if we design safe vehicles and put the safest product on the road, costs would decline. We are told it is the marketing procedures and the expectations of north Americans that increase the costs of motor vehicles. I think this argument should be demolished very quickly.

I have heard the industry argue in front of United States subcommittees, where I too have argued, that people can be given a safe car if they will pay the price. I regret that my colleagues have fallen for that because I can prove that if safety were the priority item it could be provided in a less expensive vehicle than is on the market today. I caution my colleagues not to accept the industry argument that building safe design standards into automobiles can or should have a great effect on the price.

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** Shall Clause 3 carry?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Clause 3 agreed to.

On Clause 4.

**Mr. Towers:** Mr. Chairman, on behalf of my colleague, the hon. member for Vegreville, who has been closely associated with the automotive industry, I would like to get clarification of Clause 4 from the minister as there seems to be an inconsistency in the legislation. Safety standards were to be prescribed by law and at the same time steps were being taken to allow some vehicles to be exempted. Proposed section 9.1 reads as follows:

"(1) On application by a manufacturer or importer of motor vehicles of a class for which safety standards have been prescribed under section 4 or 7, the Governor in Council may by order exempt any particular model of motor vehicle from compliance with any prescribed safety standards applicable to that model of motor vehicle where compliance with such safety standards would, in the opinion of the Governor in Council,

(a) create substantial financial hardship for the manufacturer or importer applying for the exemption;

(b) prevent the development of new safety features that are equivalent to or superior to prescribed safety standards;