

Tire Safety Act

marks in relation to motor vehicle tires and to provide for safety standards for certain motor vehicle tires imported into or exported from Canada or sent or conveyed from one province to another, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Mr. Cliff McIsaac (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, Bill S-8 has already had some discussion in the other place and, accordingly, I will make my remarks on the principles somewhat more brief than if there were not proceedings available for hon. members to read.

Bill S-8 deals with motor vehicle safety and, more specifically, with tires on motor vehicles. To give some indication of the history of the bill I should first of all say it is complementary to the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1970. That was a measure which dealt with safety in so far as tires on new cars in this country were concerned.

Since then there has been some concern expressed by provincial governments and ministers that the responsibility for safety standards for new tires by way of replacement tires has not been adequately handled or dealt with by those governments. Accordingly, the provincial ministers of transport or of highways made a request to my minister that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) take federal action to regulate and deal with the safety of all tires manufactured in Canada or imported into Canada.

About a year ago Bill S-3 was introduced to the Senate, given approval, and studied by the Senate Transport Committee. It then died on the order paper of this House at the time the election was called last year. It was reintroduced to the Senate in October, passed and approved there, with a hearing of the tire manufacturers and others before the committee, and finally introduced here late in October, 1974.

Let me give you a further brief indication of the history of this bill. At the present time the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act provides authority to issue safety standards respecting the design, construction, and functioning of tires as components of new motor vehicles for the purpose of protecting persons against personal injury, impairment of health, or death. The provinces have the authority to issue safety standards in respect of replacement tires. This division of responsibility is in accordance with the agreements reached between the Minister of Transport and the 10 provincial ministers in 1969.

It was in the fall of 1972 that the provincial ministers responsible requested the ministry of transport to bring under its jurisdiction the regulation of after-market or new tires. The original legislation, the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act, provides for the designation on these tires coming out on new cars; what kind, the brand, and the specific design, and indicating that these tires have met federal standards of safety. This bill will extend that approval to an additional 10 million new tires manufactured in Canada for replacement use on automobiles. It does not cover used tires or the sale of used tires throughout the country, for the obvious reason that it would be very difficult to spell out federal legislation to be applied. When it comes right down to it, each used tire would have to be looked at individually. The bill does extend the use

of the approved stamp for new tires manufactured in this country or brought into Canada.

The objectives of the bill are to increase the safety of Canadian motorists. It will empower the governor in council to make regulations respecting the design, construction, and function of replacement tires for motor vehicles; to ensure safe performance through certification of compliance to minimum safety standards as a condition of importation and through prohibition of interprovincial trade in tires that do not comply with these minimum standards imposed as a condition of the use of the National Tire Safety Mark.

Also, and perhaps more important, it will provide a procedure whereby manufacturers, importers, and distributors of replacement tires will be required to give notification of any defect in the design, construction, or functioning of such tires that is likely to affect the safe operation of vehicles, and this is a condition of the use of the National Tire Safety Mark. In short, it provides for a recall system in respect of the use of this particular stamp.

The bill would give the Government of Canada the authority to prescribe safety standards which would regulate the design, construction, safety performance, and labelling of tires for the purpose of protecting persons. These standards deal with the main safety features which would henceforth be incorporated in all new motor vehicle tires offered for sale in Canada. The bill establishes a national tire safety mark as a trademark which will be the exclusive property of Canada.

The bill also provides for fines for offences by manufacturers, distributors, or importers who fail to give notice of any defect and, of course, there is a section dealing with the nature of regulations that may be promulgated to bring about the implementation of this legislation. The new motor vehicle tire safety bill provides the authority to control the safety of motor vehicle tires at the point of manufacture in this country and, secondly, the authority to prohibit the importation of unsafe tires. It also provides procedures by which tires found to possess design or construction safety defects may be recalled, and the authority to broaden the safety standards so as to provide additional information on such matters as traction and tread wear for the guidance of consumers in judging economy and safety.

The bill will enhance road safety and consumer protection, and thus warrants the support of all members of the House. Certainly it does not go all the way in respect of providing perfectly safe tires all across the country on all vehicles, but then certainly tires are not the cause of a large percentage of the accidents in this country. However, when we look at the fact that last year some 6,000 people died because of motor vehicle accidents, any step we can take to reduce that number I believe we should take, and this I suggest is one of those steps.

● (2120)

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, I should like to make a few comments on this bill. I and my colleagues have carried out quite a bit of research into this matter. We find no particular fault with the establishment of tire standards per se. However, we do