

*Policy Statement on National Resources*

My hon. friend placed a proper emphasis on the need for the establishment of standards. We certainly agree with that, and we believe that in order to establish proper standards we must accumulate the necessary data because without such information and without constant comparison of conditions and knowledge of effects on health, as well as a comparison with the situation in other parts of the world, any effort to introduce control programs would be very difficult.

**Mr. Barnett:** Would the minister permit a question at this point? In relation to what he has just been saying could he give us some indication of the relationship, if any, which has been established between the meteorological service of the Department of Transport and his department?

**Mr. MacEachen:** I am not aware of any such relationship with the Department of Transport in respect of this particular national sampling activity. It may be that there is some exchange of information or facilities. I will be glad to check into that.

**Mr. Douglas:** While the minister is on this point perhaps he could inform the house how long this sampling has been taking place? Has it been going on for a sufficient duration to enable the officials to reach any conclusion, and has there been any consultation with medical research units which specialize in respiratory diseases in order to assess the results of this sampling?

**Mr. MacEachen:** I am advised that the sampling process has not accumulated enough data at the present time to establish the necessary standards. Having regard to the whole field of the relationship between pollution and respiratory problems, this particular division would initially rely greatly upon the other supporting medical services within the department, and certainly as a backstop to their studies. My point is to underline the fact that we are aware of the necessity of these standards and are getting ahead with the sampling and the collection of data that will enable us to establish standards.

• (4:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Lewis:** When did this sampling begin?

**Mr. MacEachen:** The sampling process, or the measuring, has been going on for quite a long time. Since the arrival in the department of the person to whom I referred earlier there has been a great deal of consultation with the provincial governments and a

[Mr. MacEachen.]

great deal of travelling around the country in an effort to put this matter on a national basis. On a similar basis we are conducting an over-all investigation of pollution by motor vehicles in Canada. Early experience in the United States is being closely examined and arrangements are being made to assess the extent and effects of motor vehicle pollution in various cities of Canada. Close attention is being given to the types of control devices used on motor vehicles and an assessment of their effectiveness in cold weather conditions is in progress.

Here I should like to emphasize that the existing approach to motor vehicle pollution control is not the final solution to the problem. My advice is that at best it is a stopgap and that we must search for more effective solutions to this problem. The devices currently being used have no beneficial effect on other potentially poisonous products such as nitrogen oxides which are also discharged by automobiles, nor do they apply to heavy trucks and other diesel vehicles which are frequently the main cause of complaint from the community.

We in the department agree that all measures which can reduce pollution, such as the devices being used by automobiles at the present time, should be used if they produce a beneficial effect. But this is only a beginning and there must be a continuing program of research in which real solutions are found. My department is planning in this respect and getting ahead with the job.

There has recently been verbal and newspaper comment about air pollution conditions, for example, in the city of Montreal. I think it is necessary to maintain a balance on the question of the dangers that actually exist from motor vehicle pollution. For example, there is no doubt that many residents of Montreal were extremely disquieted when told that carbon monoxide concentrations were recently at danger levels. It was reported in the press that the level had reached 10 and at times 50 parts per million for brief periods. It can be emphatically stated that these levels do not represent dangerous conditions.

The maximum standard set for industrial workers, which is 50 parts per million, is based upon continuous, eight hours per day exposure for a five day week. Workers exposed to these types of concentrations, or higher for shorter periods, do not as a rule experience any symptoms at all. Similar concentrations will be recorded in the vicinity of traffic in any part of the world and reports in