

*Fuel Consumption Standards*

States emission standards are the ones adopted. The current U.S. standards of one gram per mile emission of nitrous oxides are far superior compared to the situation we have in Canada where we have an allowable emission standard of 3.1 grams per mile.

I would point out that with those emission standards, with the development of engines in Canada that do not recognize the important source of contamination of the environment, we are not going to ensure that those engines will curtail the emission of those contaminants, and therefore we will not support the bill on that basis.

In Clause 3 of the bill there is another point that is not acceptable. Throughout the committee hearings on Bill C-48 the opposition complained bitterly that the legislation did not spell out the goals and the mechanism by which we would reach these goals, this state of Valhalla, how we could reach a new effective national energy policy, but it allowed ministerial discretion. It allows the government, by regulation, to set goals and procedure. The unfortunate point is that this particular legislation in front of us today provides the same type of government by regulation, by ministerial discretion. Certainly, that is an offensive feature of this particular legislation.

In terms of the cabinet's ability to make regulations on fleet consumption standards, there appears to be a bit of contradiction on what the government proposed in the past. The background paper to Bill C-107 indicates that the government's goal is 8.6 litres per 100 kilometres by 1985, yet the Department of Transport announced in October 1981 that the desirable Canadian goal for fuel efficiency was 8.6 litres per 100 kilometres by 1982.

Again the government is backing away from a strong fuel efficiency commitment, and once it backs away from that commitment it will make regulations for enforcement, and then the enforcement will be put in place by ministerial discretion. Our party will not be supporting the bill, on the basis that we have had enough of this legislation, legislation through regulation and ministerial discretion, setting the timing of the policy. It is certainly not acceptable to us. The history of this government is that it has failed when it comes to mustering the resolve, necessary to put forward and enforce those goals in the interests of Canadians.

We find time after time that the interest of the oil companies and other major corporations is chosen, at the expense of the consumers and at the expense of small business. That has been the order of the day. This is government fear and lack of resolve. This is the history that has brought us to the sorry state in which we find ourselves today. As other members have pointed out, it is not the Conservative Party and it is not the New Democratic Party that has brought about this chaos within our energy policy, or the lack of an effective conservation program; it is the Liberal government and its lack of resolve in this area.

Another unacceptable feature in this particular legislation appears in Clause 5 in which the auto companies are given three years' grace before the new standards have to be met. That is unfortunate in some respects, but that is probably not the most offensive part of the legislation. If you are going to

impose serious fuel efficiency standards on the auto manufacturers, if you are going to encourage Canadian companies or development companies to become involved, certainly there has to be lead time. Lead time for development of fuel efficiency engines is important, and the government must specify very clearly what is expected of the producers, and it must have in place a definition of what is wanted and needed by Canadian people. That is reasonable and just. It shows resolve in bringing about an effective fuel efficiency program. In that way those producers who need the lead time for development know what is expected, they know the targets they are working towards in order to produce the desired results. But when you waive, when you lack resolve, and say, "Well, we are going to try and sweet-talk you into it," then the ultimate objective becomes the cheapest product possible, the one that will turn the greatest profit. Corporations can then cajole the government out of its commitment to fuel efficiency in favour of the dollar. The three years' period of grace would be an acceptable period and would make sense, if the government were determined to enforce fuel efficiency standards and develop in Canada a more effective conservation program in the utilization of the private automobile. On the basis of the open-endedness of Clause 5, we will not be supporting the bill.

As regards penalties for non-compliance, the minister has said in the House that there will be no proclamation of the legislation, no bringing into force the section on penalties. It is interesting that he said "We are going to let this lie for a period of time, we are going to sweet-talk the companies into voluntary standards for fuel efficiency." The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that the government is not going to last long enough to see the implementation, far less the results or failures of this program.

• (1930)

It is important to those who inherit the task that there be a proper lead time. If standards are to be set, they should be set now. We should let those companies which will be getting involved in research and development into fuel efficiency know where we intend to be down the road three years or down the road five years.

With respect to Clause 11 and the penalties for failure to meet the standards or failure to respond appropriately, it is unfortunate the clause is full of tremendous loopholes. As the previous speaker for the Conservative Party indicated, no company in Canada will every be convicted. No company in North America will ever be convicted of violating this particular provision because, first, I doubt if the Liberal party will be around long enough to be in a position to see the outcome of this legislation, second, the Liberals do not intend to proclaim it and, third, even if it was proclaimed, it is so full of loopholes a company could escape a conviction under almost any imaginable circumstances.

I suppose this bill is not entirely bad. There does appear to be some attempt to use fuel efficiency to shape, or at least protect, small companies with production runs of, I suppose,