

would agree that this is a step forward vis-à-vis a very serious problem. We hope this is just a small step forward and that we can expect bigger and better things in relation to a very important problem in the months and years ahead.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have known occasions, believe it or not, when this House has spent a great deal of time on something not really very important. This afternoon I think we are doing the reverse of that. We are in a mood to pass, within a reasonably short period of time, a measure which is quite important.

Although the motion, as it was read from the Chair, called for the reference of this bill after second reading to the appropriate standing committee, when that time comes, Mr. Speaker, you will find that there is consent on all sides of the House to refer it to the committee of the whole so that we can put the bill through all of its stages today.

The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graffey) has pointed out in his speech today, and on many other occasions, that one of the very serious problems facing the human race is coping with accidents which take place on the highways. It strikes me that the short debate we are having this afternoon is, in a sense, a sequel to a very important debate we had a week ago today on a motion introduced in private members' hour by the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. O'Sullivan). There were a number of speeches, which I think were very important and constructive, on that occasion. I should like to mention in particular the speech of the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Andres) who gave us the statistics which make action in the field of motor vehicle safety extremely important. We had also worth while contributions by the hon. member for Bruce-Grey (Mr. Douglas), the hon. member for Peel-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Milne) and the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Philbrook). What we are doing this afternoon is a case of acting, at least in part, on the pleas made last Friday afternoon.

The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi has emphasized that there are three elements with respect to motor vehicle travel—there is the motor vehicle itself, the highway, and the driver. What we are concerned with this afternoon is of course the motor vehicle. We are glad that the minister is able to report that the co-operation among the various levels of government in this country is good. We understand from that that the provincial governments are prepared to accept the amendments which are being made this afternoon in the bill which is before us.

● (1520)

We welcome the extent to which the standards are being raised and the enforcement procedures being tightened, and I join the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi in expressing the hope that the recall provision and other measures contained in this legislation will really be implemented.

So, as I have already said, this is one of those cases where we are dealing with something that is extremely important, but

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we do not have to spin it out to emphasize that fact, and we are glad to give our support to this bill.

I have just one other word which I should like to offer, and again it is a case of recalling the excellent debate that we had a week ago today on the motion of the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth during which the statement was made on several occasions that alcohol and gasoline do not mix. I hope that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) will give his support to the campaign which the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) is waging in that respect.

It is an important measure that we have before us this afternoon. We are prepared to give it second reading, to put it through committee of the whole, and to give it third reading before four o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Lang: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent of the House to amend the motion to change the reference to the committee of the whole.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The motion put by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) is that the bill be referred to committee of the whole. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Ethier in the chair.

On Clause 1.

Mr. Towers: Mr. Chairman, I did not take part in the second reading debate on this bill because I understood it was going into committee of the whole and at that time I would have the opportunity to make some remarks on behalf of my colleagues, the hon. member for Pembina and the hon. member for Vegreville, the latter having had discussions with the minister regarding this bill.

We are in general agreement with what the government is proposing in this legislation. Nevertheless there are one or two sleepers there on which we would like to have some answers, and I understand the hon. member for Vegreville, who is not able to be here at this time, has discussed them with the Minister of Transport.

It is my understanding that the minister would be prepared to accept an amendment to Clause 1(2) to exclude farm tractors from this legislation. Some of us who are closely related to agriculture are concerned about this clause as it relates to farm tractors and the inclusion of the definition of manufacturing as it relates to farm tractors. It is my understanding, as well as that of my colleagues, that if a farmer renovates a machine in any way, he can be considered, under this piece of legislation, as a manufacturer. In other words, if you have a tractor and you put a cab on it or change the cab or do something along that line, then according to the definition