

these safeguards calm the fears of many consumers. The standards are quite rigid, and the penalties for not adhering to them are quite strict.

I am also pleased to see a feature of our government incorporated into this bill, that is, a sunset provision. The minister responsible for the act will submit a report to Parliament after five years on the administration of the act. Should any difficulties arise out of the administration of the act, then the consumer can be assured those sections of the act which are being questioned will come under the scrutiny of this House of Commons.

It is with great pleasure that I say "yea" to Bill C-11, and I hope we can proceed quickly to royal assent.

May I call it one o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans).

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I want to say just a word or two about Bill C-11. It was very interesting to hear my good friend and colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. Scott), outline the provisions of the bill. Having read the bill, I recognize that those indeed are the provisions!

I want to talk about some concerns I have about the legislation. I will begin by saying that we will support the passage of the bill, but we do so with some two or three reservations.

It is all well and good to write out the procedures which must be followed in order to effect a proper testing, particularly of natural gas equipment. Perhaps testing of electrical equipment is not quite as important, although it can cause problems. I want to talk seriously for a moment about the hazard involved with natural gas and the difficulties which can be encountered in dealing with it. I have spent a significant portion of my life working as a firefighter, and I can recall on numerous occasions going to fires or to gas leaks in an attempt to evacuate the areas and assist in bringing things under control. It scared me no end when I realized that it would be quite easy for a very major catastrophe to occur as a result of inadvertence or inadequate inspection.

I am therefore compelled to say that no matter how we write the legislation, unless we can instil in the people who are going to assume this responsibility that the responsibility is a real responsibility for the lives of people, then no legislation will suffice in any way.

I draw a comparison with the legislation passed in the province of Ontario some years ago regarding motor vehicle safety inspection. It was done for a good reason. It was done because it was believed that there were on the roads of Ontario vehicles which were unsafe, and we therefore passed legislation which empowered licensed mechanics to inspect vehicles and to issue stickers saying that vehicles were in good working order as far as safety was concerned. I can tell hon. members that it has been brought to my attention on numerous occasions that after cars had been inspected and purchased, brakes

failed and wheels fell off. Vehicles were not adequately inspected. The safety of the drivers and people in the vicinity of those vehicles was placed in some jeopardy.

With that in the back of my mind I was concerned about this legislation. It will become a primary responsibility of the minister—who is undoubtedly listening to me with one ear and listening with the other to his colleagues—to ensure that the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs does in fact oversee inspections and inspectors in such a way as to protect the safety of Canadians. It is not good enough to assume that just because there are penalties in the bill people given the responsibility of carrying out day to day inspections will automatically do that in such a way as to guarantee the safety of those people who must come into contact with these apparatuses.

I urge that the minister have a staff of a size sufficient to make sure that not only meters and other paraphernalia to be used are properly tested but also that there be a continuation of spot checks both on those who are doing inspections and on the work which has presumably been inspected and for which certificates have been issued, and that spot checks be made on a regular basis across the country to guarantee the quality of the work. As I say, in the case of natural gas in particular the hazard involved is significant. I suggest to the minister further that with regard to employees who are currently involved in testing—if I speak quickly, I will get to the end—they be given priority and the opportunity to undertake that work.

With those few comments I will now allow the bill to be read the second time.

• (1300)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Chair is a little uncertain. Is there a disposition among members to put the bill through all stages?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Would the minister like to have his bill through all stages before lunch or after?

Mr. Ouellet: Before lunch, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, considered in committee, reported, read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1.03 p.m. the House took recess.