

gravel roads the tires were a hazard. They lasted for only 10,000 or 12,000 miles. In my opinion, the public was being cheated by manufacturers who indicated that a 4-ply tire rating was being provided with a 2-ply tire. Under most off-highway driving conditions that was not true and the tires had to be replaced in a short time.

I know that some large companies in the automobile business sell tires which are classed as seconds. Perhaps there is a flaw in the tire which is repaired to meet certain standards, but still they are seconds. It will now be very difficult for a manufacturer to put a label on those tires that will tell the consumer they are second-hand tires, repaired tires or seconds in terms of some defect. As I read the bill, there are no provisions covering the sale of those tires. A large number of tires are culled by the tire manufacturers and sold through hardware stores or automobile stores. They are sold as loss leaders. However, this legislation will not guarantee that they will meet safety standards.

● (1610)

I shall now deal with radial tires. Long before domestic or North American manufacturers produced radial tires, European manufacturers of good reputation were making high quality radials. Now they are available in this country. You can get ordinary radials or steel belted radials. At one time, domestic manufacturers pretended in their advertising that non-radial tires were better than radials. We know that this is not necessarily true. For a long time North American manufacturers were reluctant to admit that the manufacturers of other countries made tires superior in safety and over-all quality to tires made in North America. I suppose Canadian and American manufacturers want nothing to do with a process they cannot control.

Now, of course, we manufacture radial tires. It is generally agreed that for certain drivers, certain automobiles and certain driving conditions, steel belted radials are best, as their performance is sometimes superior to that of other tires. Not all drivers like radial tires as they react differently and do not corner like conventional tires. Some say that the safety record of radials is superior to that of conventional tires. Personally, I do not like steel belted tires; this is just my own preference. I am not used to the way a car corners with them and find that a radial tire equipped car handles somewhat differently. But that is by the way.

I suggest that the government should institute a method for rating the safety of tires imported into this country. Foreign tire manufacturers ought to meet safety specifications laid down by the government, and consumers ought to be made aware of those specifications. As new tires are developed, new standards and specifications will also need to be developed to protect consumers.

This bill will not affect retreaded tires. It says nothing about the state of casings or when tires may safely be retreaded. Often a small manufacturer retreads tires in a small factory. The provincial motor vehicles branch exercises little control over him. Surely we should introduce standards for retreads. For instance, how does one know how well the retread will stick to the casing? The retreading process involves great heat and in my opinion no tire should be retreaded more than twice. The original casing

Tire Safety Act

should not be used for a third retread. Unfortunately, buses in my area use tires which have been retreaded three or more times. They ply the public highways on unsafe tires, often at unsafe speeds, and constitute a hazard.

Commercial vehicles also use retreads. How many members of parliament have driven behind a truck loaded to the limit and bouncing all over the road on retreaded tires? You know that it will not be long before some of those tires are spread all over the road—and you hope you are not behind the truck when it happens. I sometimes see two or three of the eight or ten wheels of a commercial vehicle out of alignment and out of balance. Sometimes these trucks are driven in a way not conducive to safety.

As retreads play an important part in truck operations, the government ought to establish standards governing the safety of retreads. I suggest that there should be stamped on such tires the original date of manufacture and the date of subsequent retreads. Then anyone could tell at a glance the history of the tire and judge how safe it was. Tire manufacturers should be made responsible for their tires. There is not much point in asking service station operators to report on the conditions of tires; they have enough work to do. As for the average motor vehicle inspector, unless the truck is 15 years old and needs a paint job, he is not likely to look at the tires.

Provision should be made for records of tires to be kept as many commercial vehicles drive coast to coast on retreaded, revulcanized tires. I suggest the government ought to consider this matter. I have never thought manufacturers should be the arbiters of safety standards and I am not willing to allow them this decision. I am, therefore, pleased to see language in this bill whereby manufacturers and the federal government jointly will establish standards for Canadian and imported tires. Standards will be arrived at in co-operation between the industry and the federal government. This is essential, because there are many new cars on the road today that are not very safe. Many of them I would not consider buying or even accepting as a gift. I could name some of them. However, anyone who drives them knows their defects and unsafe condition; they are fairly apparent. In some cases the motor is too big for the body, or the tire size is too small for the weight of the vehicle.

● (1620)

As the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey) mentioned, this problem with regard to safety has not been met by the manufacturers. Tires installed on new cars are overloaded. One need only go back a few years when 2-ply tires were installed on new Chevs and Fords. You endangered your life by driving on a gravel road. I am sure many members could state unfortunate experiences they have had with 2-ply tires in rural communities. In other manufacturing fields as well, certain standards were set which the manufacturers considered safe, but they did not pass the standards of anyone else. The work of the motor vehicles branch should be extended considerably. This bill is a worth-while start.

No member should leave here thinking we have solved the automobile tire safety problem without considering the other two problems to which I have referred, retreads and substandard tires rejected by the manufacturer as top line