

National Trade Mark and True Labelling Act

Mr. Comeau: This point is probably valid, Mr. Speaker. The government often refers matters to the courts, and perhaps we should make a positive determination here. The government is very conscious of the fact that we should not infringe provincial rights, and therefore we should be very careful in this field too.

Mr. H. W. Danforth (Kent-Essex): Mr. Speaker, I do not rise to support this bill. I have no doubt that this bill is of prime concern to the hon. member who introduced it, and I have no objection to a bill of this nature being introduced. But I feel that many of these bills deal with issues that are too narrow in scope. This is a prime example, because we are dealing with but one aspect of the sale of gasoline.

The hon. member who preceded me stated very emphatically that the bill should go through quickly because it was narrow in scope and dealt only with octane rating. He suggested we should let the committee make a decision on the bill. My objection is that this bill is not broad enough in scope, that we are dealing only with one small aspect of the entire problem, namely, the octane rating and the difference it makes to the price of gasoline. If we are going to ask the committee to spend not only valuable parliamentary time but the valuable time of its members considering this bill, it should consider the whole subject and not only one little segment of it.

I am concerned about the bill restricting itself to octane content. I find it strange indeed that a bill of this nature was not introduced years ago rather than today when the whole question of automobile propulsion is in a state of flux. Although the octane content of gasoline may be of prime quality today, a year or two from now it could be a very insignificant factor indeed. We are here seized with the proposition that we should pass a bill to make it mandatory for gasoline companies and those who distribute gasoline to acknowledge in a very concrete fashion the one provision of the bill.

There are indications from all across North America, the home of the automobile, that air pollution is a very

considerable factor in automobile propulsion. Many companies and people are seized with the problem of fuel pollution, and no doubt octane reading in gasolines is part of their over-all consideration. But we do not want our parliamentary procedures to be tied to the contemplation of a bill which, even before it gets to committee, may have its provisions made obsolete. This is why I am concerned with this measure, though it is to the credit of a private member to bring in a bill of this nature. Indeed, he has every right to do so and I have no quarrel with him on that score. We know he has a valid and good reason for bringing in this measure. But as I say, I am concerned, as I know you are, Mr. Speaker, with the whole question of the introduction of private members' bills. We have so many of them to deal with and in such a limited time. A bill of this kind has to be dealt with in a period of one hour, and it embraces a subject of complexity and one of interest not only to consumers but to the oil industry at large.

We may think that in bringing in a regulation controlling the sale of fuel only we are not affecting many people. But this regulation would affect not only consumers of gasoline but the entire oil industry, an industry that should be given ample opportunity to examine the ramifications of the bill and to inform itself about it. It is said that this bill should be dealt with by the committee. I am not prepared to let the bill go to committee. Indeed, I am prepared to assume responsibility for talking it out. We have to take a stand somewhere in regard to the way we deal with public bills. I am very incensed because the government puts the emphasis on propelling their members' bills through to committee but—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour assigned to the consideration of private members' business has now expired. The House stands adjourned until Monday at two o'clock in the afternoon.

At five o'clock the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.