

plin. Tamplin prepared a rather detailed critique in which he described Sternglass as "obsessed" with his data and concluded that Sternglass's estimates were way off. But then Tamplin caused the AEC great consternation by coming up with his own estimate—that fallout from tests may have caused

thousands of fetal deaths in 1963.

A sharp struggle then ensued within the AEC over whether Tamplin's estimate, which had first been circulated in an internal seminar paper, should be published, and where. Gofman claims that AEC officials in Washington—particularly John R. Totter, director of the

AEC's division of biology and medicine, and Spofford English, assistant general manager for research and development, tried, in letters and phone calls, to get Tamplin to limit himself to a critique of Sternglass without making any estimate of his own of the number of fetal deaths caused by fallout. The

---

## Air Pollution: Muskie Throws down the Gauntlet

Recently, a canny observer of the congressional scene remarked that the environmental issue could be a crucial one in this fall's elections "if only some of the candidates would take a stand in favor of pollution." His point was well taken, for politicians have been able to board the environmental bandwagon simply by making the right kind of noises from the podium. The air and water pollution legislation enacted in past years, while it has established a new federal-state framework for dealing with pollution problems, has had weak enforcement provisions and has not been well supported financially. These earlier measures were passed by large majorities, but, in terms of rigor, they reflected what the traffic would bear politically and that was deemed to be not very much. Now, the Senate Air and Water Pollution Subcommittee, which has been at work for months on an air pollution bill, is pressing for a measure strong enough really to test the commitment of members of Congress to the cause of environmental quality.

Provisions of the bill were outlined at a press conference last week by the chairman of the subcommittee, Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine, who was flanked by Senator Caleb Boggs of Delaware, the subcommittee's ranking Republican. Although the bill is too complex to be described in any detail here, the aim of this measure is to establish mid-1970 deadlines for the adoption and enforcement of national air quality standards adequate to protect the public health. By 1975 automobile manufacturers would be expected to have reduced exhaust emissions 90 percent below those allowed under current standards—an accomplishment the Nixon Administration has projected for 1980. Stationary sources of pollution, such as power plants and chemical factories, would face similar deadlines. And plants built

after the law's enactment would have to use the best pollution-control technology available.

Yet, however drastic the reduction in emissions required, the bill recognizes that in some urban areas this alone would not suffice to meet air quality standards and protect public health. Accordingly, pollution abatement plans submitted by the states for federal approval would have to specify those additional steps that are necessary. These might include, for instance, limiting or banning automobiles from downtown areas and providing adequate public transport for those areas; or, for another example, regional land-use plans, restricting new industry to those sites where they will cause the least pollution problems, might have to be adopted.

Past pollution abatement efforts have been hampered by awkward, time-consuming enforcement procedures and what seems an abiding tolerance and patience on the part of state and federal authorities. In May, Ralph Nader and his associates depicted Senator Muskie, the principal architect of clean air legislation, as a paper tiger in the pollution jungle. But the new Muskie bill is clearly a "tough" one. It would not only tighten up abatement deadlines, it would allow private citizens to go to court and demand compliance with those deadlines. Moreover, the federal government could not do business with companies violating emission standards and company officials twice convicted of knowing violations would be subject to heavy criminal penalties.

This measure, taken as it stands, may never be enacted by the Congress, however. The air pollution bill which was passed by the House in June was along lines recommended by President Nixon. While stronger than any air pollution bill passed previously, it is weaker than the Muskie bill and sets no new automobile emission standards. Since Muskie is a front-runner for the Demo-

cratic presidential nomination in 1972, the Nixon Administration can be expected to try to keep him from upstaging the President. But for the Administration to oppose the bill may be awkward, for it was approved by the Muskie subcommittee unanimously and has bipartisan backing. Muskie indicated that the subcommittee bill should encounter little difficulty in the Senate, but that bringing it through conference with the House without major changes will not be easy.

There will no doubt be a pained outcry against the bill from industry, as Muskie has predicted. But the fact that the standards it would establish are defined as the minimal standards needed to protect the public health should give Muskie the high ground. At the news conference a reporter demanded to know whether the subcommittee had evidence that the automobile manufacturers could in fact meet the 1975 standards. Muskie, with a show of surprise and indignation, responded that it was not the duty of the Congress to find technological solutions to air pollution but to provide the health standards the polluters must meet. He recalled that, in World War II, President Roosevelt had called on industry to produce 100,000 airplanes a year, and that industry had met that seemingly impossible goal. "If they can gear up to fight a war, they can gear up to protect the public health," he said.

Muskie believes that it is chiefly public concern over air pollution that has made "environmental quality" a major national issue. To cope with pollution involves hard political choices, a fact pointed up by the Muskie subcommittee's new bill. In voting for or against just such measures as this one, members of Congress will indicate whether they are on the environmental bandwagon to stay.

—LUTHER J. CARTER