

I would think there is.

Mr. GUDE. The principle Government heating plants use fuel oil?

Mr. COUNTS. Yes.

Mr. GUDE. Very few burn coal.

Mr. COUNTS. Yes.

Mr. GUDE. I think the fuel industry is trying to reduce the amount of sulphur content because it recognizes the problem. In the research laboratories in Pittsburgh they are doing considerable research in sulphur reduction.

Mr. VIA. Mr. Gude, I am aware of these experiments as well as the research being made on the extensive use of the electronic precipitators and water precipitators and the removal of particular matter of smoke stacks, where these devices are used. These can only use the particular matter or the solid matter and have no ability to remove a gaseous substance such as sulphur dioxide or sulphur trioxide. The experiments that are being conducted to remove these gases are at a point now where considerable research is yet to be done and it would be fantastically expensive for normal histat, even now, to install an electronic precipitator to remove the particular matter. It would exceed twenty thousand dollars.

Mr. GUDE. I know there are several ways in which the sulphur can be reduced. For example, the coal people showed us one experiment where they gasified the coal, so to speak, and converted the sulphur into hydrogen sulphide; extracted the sulphur, which they could sell, and by the time they burned whatever it was they got from the coal, there was practically no emission at all of sulphur. It's an entirely new chemical process. As I recall, heat was cheaper this way then under the old process. Is there any kind of research going on in this area?

Mr. VIA. There has been research that has been conducted on the removal of sulphur prior to burning the oil, which Mr. Counts covered in his presentation. But there is only one plant in Louisiana now conducting this actual process. The production of that type of oil is a by-product. It's very limited and it's very expensive processes.

Mr. GUDE. You think it is feasible to reduce the sulphur emission by other means then by just reducing the sulphur in the oil when it arrives?

Mr. VIA. At the moment, not practical.

Mr. GUDE. But it is possible to do it in the laboratory?

Mr. VIA. Yes.

Mr. GUDE. In the legislation we have proposed, we provide for a system of exemptions whereby if an industry or an individual was unable to comply completely with this law, they could get an exemption for one year. Would you have any objections to this? You have given us some very comprehensive statements on this situation as you see it, and obviously, the industry is trying to comply.

Looking at other testimony and so on, I think maybe this Committee could accept it. I think the governing body would be in the same position. Would you have any objection to this exemption process until the industry was able to comply?

Mr. COUNTS. Yes, sir, I do. I don't think it would be practicable from the standpoint of when you consider the large volume of residual oil