

to the Hazardous Products Act, the board of review will be created and will hold its first hearing at the end of this month.

[English]

#### HOME OWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS

**Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth):** Mr. Speaker, I might say that I am pleased to note that there is some indication of concern on the government's part for these people who have installed UFFI, but I did not hear any mention about dollars and cents, or anything about compensation for those people who were given formal approval by the government to put this stuff in their homes. Is the minister aware of a number of groups forming across the country, the latest one in Toronto last night, well organized, responsible and voluble groups who are threatening massive class actions if the government does not consider some form of compensation for those who have put this material in their homes?

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General):** Madam Speaker, I find it somewhat puzzling and irresponsible that the hon. member should make such remarks. The government is assuming its responsibilities and will spend a few million dollars to make this house study and monitoring program available to Canadians. To my mind, it is a very significant first step, and the hon. member should commend us for this initiative instead of giving the impression he wants to solve this issue even before the board of review established under the Hazardous Products Act has had a chance to hold public hearings and submit its report. I am aware of the hon. member's interest in matters within the purview of my department. He ought to be familiar with the Hazardous Products Act and know that we cannot speak of really hazardous products as long as that board has not presented its report.

[English]

#### EXPOSURE TO FORMALDEHYDE GAS

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** This question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Madam Speaker. Now that the government has assumed a degree of responsibility on this urea formaldehyde question, and my question to the minister concerns the health of Canadians who may have been exposed to urea formaldehyde gas, what is she doing to check on those people who may have been exposed to the gas? Is she prepared to follow the example established by her colleague, and set up, in co-ordination with the provinces, action centres across the country to do a check on the health of Canadians who may have been exposed to this gas?

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General):** Madam Speaker, I would like to say that the co-ordination committee will give top

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priority to all men and women who have health problems. One of the cabinet instructions was to make sure that this co-ordination committee will give priority to men and women whose health is affected or who believe that they are affected by this product.

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[English]

#### NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM

##### AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR EXTENSION OF NATURAL GAS SERVICE

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who will recall that in a letter to me, dated January of this year, he stated that under the National Energy Program provision has been made for federal-provincial assistance for the extension of natural gas service into communities where such service would otherwise be economically prohibitive. I have been informed that the Hon. Robert Welch, the minister's provincial counterpart in Ontario, has given approval for the construction of a natural gas line into the town of Parry Sound but has been informed by the federal ministry that funds for such a project are not available this year. Will the minister tell this House if, as he stated, there are funds for such projects and, if so, when such funds will be available?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, the announcement made in the National Energy Program, indeed, provides for several hundred million dollars to be allocated over the next ten years for this particular purpose. The first priority we have set up, however, for this year has been the establishment of the Home Conservation and Oil Substitution Program, which means subsidizing individual citizens to the tune of \$800 for conversion away from oil. We want to set this program in operation and have it fully going this year. Next year we will start the program concerning help for distribution systems.

As far as the particular project of concern to the hon. member is concerned, I might say that even if Mr. Welch had approved this project, that does not necessarily mean it would be eligible for a grant. This would have to be studied in terms of whether or not the project is viable on its own or needs help and support. That program will have funds available starting next year.

#### PROVINCIAL ROLE

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Madam Speaker, I was certainly informed by the minister, and certainly misled as a great many others were, that it was up to the province of Ontario, that there was \$300 million plus in there and the federal government was willing, able, and ready to hand that money over. That was the impression you gave me in January. You said to go to your provincial counterparts; they are the ones who make the decision. Now you have changed the rules. What are your comments on that, Mr. Minister?