

studying ways and means of doing the job in a better way than that of total removal. We are looking at ways of sealing walls and installing air exchangers which, to the best of our knowledge at this time, are better solutions than total removal.

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We are proceeding in a rational orderly way because we take this problem seriously. We have a testing program in place. We have a program in place to certify contractors to do remedial work. We have a program in place for remedial advice which is categorized to specific problems in specific homes. This is not a case of throwing money at a solution hoping that we will get off the hook. It is a case of an intelligent orderly program. However, I just heard the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) tell the House and the Canadian public that the only solution is the total removal of this foam. It is typical of the New Democratic Party to suggest that kind of thing which would be total fiscal irresponsibility. To do what the NDP suggests would cost between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion. It is not even needed.

This afternoon we heard the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), who has urea formaldehyde foam in his own place, tell us in a honest and forthright way that there is no problem in his home. He is warm, secure and happy in his home. He has even saved money on his heating bill. The media has made this problem sensational. And the problem for the hon. member for St. John's East and for many home owners throughout the country is that the market value of their homes has decreased, not because there is a tremendous problem, but because of sensationalism in the press.

I would like to take this opportunity to read into the record a report that was broadcast on the CBC Radio national news on May 19, 1982, which has to do with the situation in the United States. The report opens with this comment:

The U.S. Congress has been holding hearings in Washington this week into the problems thousands of Americans are having because they used urea formaldehyde foam insulation in their homes. Although there have been calls in the U.S. for an aid program similar to Canada's for these home owners, the Reagan administration doesn't think the health problems warrant it.

Then a reporter from Washington elaborated by saying:

Reagan administration officials said today there is not enough evidence of a health hazard from formaldehyde foam for the government to give aid to people who used the material to insulate their homes. Legislation has been introduced in Congress to establish an aid program similar to one Canada has started, but administration officials down-played the reports of a cancer risk from formaldehyde.

Canadian professor Dr. Michael Newhouse of McMaster University testified at today's hearings. He said there is no health hazard from the insulation, and he said it was a mistake to ban the material.

Dr. Newhouse said:

There is no question that the psychological harm done to date by the ban far exceeds the potential health effects, if such effects exist at all. People may not have had a problem before, but, since all of this stuff has appeared in the press and has not been denied by government health agencies, a huge problem exists.

The reporter concludes by saying:

Congress is expected to take up legislation for the aid program this year, but its prospects of passage are dim.

### *Urea Formaldehyde Insulation Act*

If we keep having filibustering from across the way, the prospects for the passage of this bill will also be dim. But it is some action, and we are proud of it.

We have heard comments that the government is responsible for this mess, that we approved the product. Let us make it clear that every year tens of thousands of new products appear on the market. Some are very useful, some are not. But the government does not approve these new products. The government cannot approve or even test all new products. In order to do so we would need an entire army of employees, inspectors, scientists and experts. That is impossible. If it were possible, the cries of outrage from the official opposition would be so loud that we would not be able to hear ourselves think. Hon. members on the other side would complain about government interference and about free enterprise. Let us make it clear that the government is no more responsible for urea formaldehyde foam insulation than for any other product put on the market by manufacturers.

I have already touched upon some provisions of the bill and some of the action that we are prepared to take if hon. members opposite will allow us to do so. I have reviewed the provisions of the bill, as I have said, but let me enumerate some other actions that have been taken. Let me point out to members opposite who refuse to go into the facts that we have funded through public moneys UFFI home owner groups throughout the country enabling them to get a better reading of the picture and enabling them to do their work in representing their membership. An amount of \$40,000 has gone to a group in Quebec; an amount of \$39,000 has gone to the association of Ontario home owners with urea formaldehyde foam insulation; an amount of \$4,000 has gone to concerned urea formaldehyde foam home owners of St. John's, Newfoundland; and an amount of \$7,000 has gone to HUFFI, Manitoba. A co-ordinating grant of \$30,000 for the production and distribution of a news letter to UFFI home owners throughout the country was given to a group here in Ottawa.

A national advisory committee has been established to consult and meet with the minister, officials of his department and officials of UFFI centres. The meeting will be held this month. I will be attended by representatives of 12 home owner organizations across Canada from the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario, the prairies and British Columbia. Mr. Richard Patten, president of HUFFI, Ottawa, has agreed to accept the position of chairman of this council. The purpose is to dialogue and discuss possible remedial measures. UFFI officials from the UFFI centres, the minister and representatives of home owner groups across the country will be able to exchange ideas in a reasonable and orderly fashion and review research. In short, it is for people to come together to see what can be done about this problem and to find out what advice they have for the government on the best way to proceed.

The hon. member for St. John's East and the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Jarvis) raised the question of regulations today. There was some sinister suggestion that regulations are being hidden or were not forthcoming because there was some purpose in keeping them in the dark. That is not so. The