

*Urea Formaldehyde Insulation Act*

will be asked to draw up a specific schedule and call up witnesses as soon as possible so that we may notify those wishing to submit a brief to the committee and give them enough time for research. We shall have to sit all through the summer if we want to be ready to table the report on December 1 as requested by the government under the above-mentioned order of reference.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that scientific research will be necessary because it is important for the victims of those conditions to be well informed. We will of course ask the provinces for their co-operation and as I said before, by calling the situation a national disaster we hope to get their co-operation thus following the example of the city of Laval assessing its property owners. It is in that context that I will chair the Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs which has been empowered today to investigate urea formaldehyde in Canada.

• (1720)

*[English]*

**Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to speak on Bill C-109. At the outset I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to my colleague, the hon. member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly), who has been our party critic on this issue. The hon. member for Comox-Powell River has taken a fair amount of flak on this question because he has insisted upon the best possible deal for UFFI home owners. In spite of the combined pressure from the Liberal and Conservative Parties to rush the bill through as though this were some kind of gift package they were placing under the Christmas tree to surprise people, the hon. member has kept insisting that the people will be surprised, because when they open the package they will find there is nothing there for them. As a matter of fact, the pressure to have the money spent by December 31, 1982, means that by this coming Christmas many UFFI home owners will be sadly disappointed about any hopes they had that this bill will meet their needs.

I believe that the bill coming in at this time emphasizes the slowness of the government in responding to the situation and its slowness in accepting its responsibility. We remember that this program was actively encouraged and promoted by the government. However, when problems arose with this program the government ran for cover and hid. It has been very slow in accepting its responsibility. When it did accept its responsibility it did so in a very halting and inadequate manner.

Perhaps one of the major concerns is that the maximum \$5,000, as it was originally termed, is completely inadequate when one considers that the cost of removal of urea formaldehyde in most urban areas is estimated to be between four and five times that much.

Perhaps the situation faced by UFFI home owners can best be illustrated by reading a letter from a widow who signed herself as "a very disturbed citizen". She sent this letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and I think it outlines better

than I or other members can the real situation facing many UFFI home owners. Many find themselves in a similar position. The letter states:

Dear Sir:

Re: Urea Formaldehyde Foam Insulation

As one of many home owners who was encouraged by way of advertising and government grants to upgrade the insulation of my home and being concerned with energy conservation I now find myself in very serious circumstances for having proceeded.

First, I had the attic insulated, then proceeded to check out what type to use in the walls.

Some of the loose fills were reported to settle greatly, were not moisture resistant, did not fill all crevices and would deteriorate if becoming damp.

Foam insulation on the other hand, was supposedly easier to install, more economical and because it was inserted when moist, would fill all cracks and crevices.

However, the polyurethane foam was reported to expand after insertion, thus warping or bulging the walls. A company (Rapco Foam) was highly recommended by Mr. Dalgleish of Winnipeg when guesting on a local radio program.

I contacted the company to check out their insulation. I was told:

It would not settle or expand;

It resisted moisture;

It would enhance the comfort and value of my home;

Its R Value (3½ inches inserted in the wall cavity would increase that of my house by 18.12;

It was chemically stable, and

It was government tested and approved (CHMC approved \*SAç8209).

I still have the famous brochures on hand.

The wall insulation was completed April 20, 1978 at a cost of \$652. Apparently the most costly \$652 I have ever spent! Now I find:

The insulation has toxic effects which can result in severe medical problems.

My house has depreciated 30-40 per cent of its otherwise market value.

It would be most difficult to sell (if a buyer could be found) because real estate and mortgage companies are just not interested!

For those who are financially able to remedy the problem, there is still no guarantee the house will ever return to its previous market value; real estate companies are now asking "does this house have, or has it ever had UFFI?"

A medical doctor has advised that I don't inform the neighbours UFFI is in my house.

If the hazards to the people living in the house are as minimal as government is trying to say, why would it be of concern to neighbours?

She then gives something of her life history, which I think is interesting and relevant in view of the background of many of the people who are suffering because they accepted this government program:

Married in 1949, we had our first child in 1950. In July of 1951 my husband became ill and remained so, passing away in 1965.

It is now 31 years since I became the family supporter. During these years I worked a full-time job, at times a second part-time job, as well as caring for my two children, paying child care for 11½ years (no grandparents, or uncles to lend a hand) and put a down payment on a house.

We never owned a car after 1952—my children and a house were my first priorities. They had music, skating and swimming lessons, both completed grade XII and had further education. Thus they never had time on their hands to become problems to the community. Believe me on a salary of \$125 per month in 1951 to \$463 per month in 1970, it did not come without strict budgeting and much sacrificing.

As a result of an automobile accident (being a passenger in a car that was hit), since the end of 1970 I have been on a medical disability of under \$278 a month (private insurance) and not subject to increase. However I rent a suite to