

Urea Formaldehyde Insulation Act

Mr. Speaker, I would like to come back to the special opportunity that will be given to us with the budget to be brought forward next Monday. Would the minister exert some sort of a special pressure on the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen), and the Cabinet to have the budget proposal in this legislation multiplied by four at least. Based on the estimates I could get, I can say that to correct a very ordinary home, the cost is apparently in the neighbourhood of \$15,000 to \$20,000. Therefore, the proposal for a maximum grant of \$5,000 represents a mere 25 per cent of the costs of the needed repairs. The situation will absolutely not be corrected. This is a totally inadequate measure and 300,000 Canadians are left with unsafe conditions and the necessity of getting rid of their homes. Humanly speaking, Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable, and I have every reason to ask the minister to consider this opportunity. For six months we have been urging the minister to come up with a decent budget, a budget that could to some extent revitalize the economy. Finally, too late as always, he took the decision to come up with a budget next Monday. I think that this budget is a God-sent opportunity for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) to urge the Minister of Finance to set aside enough of the funds necessary to implement a worth-while suggestion which might correct the predicament in which those three Canadian families find themselves. Failing that, we will be forced to conclude that the minister will always have the option of being charitable toward 300,000 Canadians, but a charitable approach is not what we need under the circumstances.

As Members of Parliament, we must show that we have responsibilities toward those 300,000 Canadians. Someone made a mistake, unknowingly I agree, but it was a mistake by the federal government in the first place and 300,000 Canadians simply cannot be expected to pay for that mistake. They were encouraged and even given grants to buy a hazardous product. Of course, I am not accusing the minister of being responsible for that unhealthy situation, but the work was done by certain people on behalf of the government. Had I been a member of a government responsible for making such a

mistake, I would have been the first one to try to correct a mistake which turned out to be an injustice toward 300,000 Canadians. I would have wanted to solve the problem by offering generous grants. We cannot accept and endorse a suggestion which solves only part of the problem and not all of it. We cannot approve of a suggestion which leaves 300,000 Canadians in misery to cope with insuperable difficulties and leave the responsible minister under the impression that we are satisfied with his suggestion. We are not going to praise the minister for a suggestion which falls far short of the objective. The minister has taken concrete steps in the past and we must repeat to him that his suggestion is not good enough because it does not solve the problem of those 300,000 Canadians. We hope that the minister will keep in mind the remarks made on this side of the House as well as those which I am sure he has heard in other circles. He also met personally the victims of that calamity. But what a splendid opportunity with a budget being tabled Monday next! The minister should try to get something out of the Minister of Finance because he knows full well that his proposal is inadequate to allow those 100,000 homes to be repaired. The minister knows it full well and he has made an effort but, as I said, it is inadequate, and I dare hope that the minister will obtain special funds to take corrective action, so that thousands of Canadians may live in a home as safe as that of millions of other Canadians at present. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this issue is not only relevant but also very important, and we hope to make the minister more aware of the problem in committee if he is not already, and we will support the representations he will make to the Minister of Finance to obtain the required estimates. We will then have done our duty and assumed our responsibilities in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order. It being six o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday next at two o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

At 6 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.