

*Oral Questions*

creation. As I said earlier, we hope to be able to announce those measures within a very short period of time.

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**HEALTH AND SAFETY****BAN ON USE OF UREA FORMALDEHYDE INSULATION—ADVICE TO HOME OWNERS**

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In a statement on December 17, the minister announced a ban on the use of urea formaldehyde as a means of insulation because of the serious danger it posed to health. I might say this came about five years after the same concerns were expressed by authorities in the United States at the federal and state level. What advice does she as minister of health have with regard to the 60,000 Canadian homes which already have this material installed, many of which had it installed under the government's CHIP program?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** For the moment, Madam Speaker, in view of the serious allegations contained in the preliminary report submitted by the experts to the government regarding this insulation material, it has been decided to advise Canadians that a moratorium on the use of the aforementioned chemical will be in force until the presentation of a final report by the committee of experts, at which time we will obviously review our decision one way or the other. For the time being Canadians who have used this product for home insulation purposes and who have developed the symptoms mentioned in the press release should check with their physician if their condition seems to warrant it. As stated in the press release they can also contact the officials at any office of the federal Department of Energy or the National Research Council or even of my own department all across Canada who will let them know what steps should be taken to stop possible leaks of this insulation material in their homes.

[*English*]

**Mr. McGrath:** Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my supplementary question to the minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. According to reports, in 33 per cent of the 60,000 Canadian homes which have urea formaldehyde installed as insulation, it was installed under the government approved CHIP program. In other words, up until the time of the ban it was approved as an acceptable material under CMHC standards. Is the minister prepared to offer any advice, consolation or compensation, either under the CHIP program, through CMHC or under a special program, for those 60,000 Canadian homes which have this insulation material, especially those which had it installed under a government program approved by the minister, and, indeed, subsidized by the government?

**Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works):** Madam Speaker, I would prefer to await the final results referred to by my colleague who answered the hon. member's last question. When we have the final report as to what are the implications as a result of the use of UF, I expect to be in a better position to answer directly the question of the hon. member.

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**FISHERIES****ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO FISHERMEN OVER WINTER MONTHS**

**Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. It would have been addressed to his understudy, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, who seems to be still recovering from the Christmas break. A few weeks before Christmas the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development announced a \$4.2 million emergency assistance program to assist the native fishermen of British Columbia in light of the very poor fishing year experienced on the west coast during 1980. Indications are that there were over 62 bankruptcies registered by fishermen with Royal Bank branches in recent weeks. What program does the minister have to offer by way of economic assistance to fishermen, hard pressed by poor fishing conditions and low prices in the past fishing year, to help them through these bleak winter months?

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. member would not want to mislead the House by linking two problems which are really quite different. As the hon. member knows, it is rather difficult for many Indian fishermen to get the normal commercial loans because the houses in which many of them reside are community property and, as such, cannot be put up as collateral. For this reason my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, in continuation of the long-standing policy of helping native people get involved in the commercial fishery, particularly on the west coast, announced this program.

● (1500)

As to the other question with respect to the difficulties experienced by fishermen in light of the poor season they have had both in salmon and in herring roe, we are monitoring the situation. We have indicated that where loans are guaranteed under the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act time should be made available for fishermen to reimburse and that reimbursement of the capital part of the loans should be delayed. In fact, we have asked commercial enterprises to show understanding for fishermen who traditionally have been very good credit risks, as the records of the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act show.

**Mr. Siddon:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the minister would suggest that non-native fishermen should mortgage their homes, as many have had to do, in order to tide themselves through these difficult periods.