

of newspaper and other clippings. My friends in the NDP nod. They receive it as well. If that is what the minister has in mind, I expect someone on the government side to say that the government will certify these properties as health-safe and give them the Good Housekeeping seal of approval. If there are any problems caused by the urea formaldehyde, the Government of Canada should look after the problems right down the line.

Mr. Ouellet: Not the second part.

Mr. Blenkarn: The minister says, "not the second part". Even a used car dealer will give a better guarantee than that which the minister is offering.

Mr. Ouellet: We do not know whether the people are allergic. It depends on the people.

Mr. Blenkarn: The minister does not know if they are allergic. The question is whether he is prepared to certify Mr. Stewart's home as safe, not only for Mr. Stewart but for anyone who may buy it. If not, then the minister has not done anything for him. This insulation does not bother Mr. Stewart, his wife or his grandchildren. It only bothers his pocketbook because it cannot be sold.

No one will buy a home with urea formaldehyde foam insulation because of what the minister has said and what his research has shown as well as what was produced by the department and the National Research Council. He must now bring in a program that certifies the home as health-safe, not only for the current occupants but for any occupant who might be in that home for at least the next 25 years. That is the kind of certification we need.

The documentation from the National Research Council says that the foam can create fungus. There is an indication that the acid in the foam will deteriorate the metal in the walls. There are some suggestions that the fungus will grow, permeate the wood and brick and seriously damage the structure itself. Where is the guarantee? I do not see that guarantee in anything that has been issued from the department. That is the kind of guarantee the department ought to give. I do not think it would cost all that much. I do not think you have to tear all these houses down, as the members of the New Democratic Party have suggested. I do not think you have to tear all the foam out of all the houses in the country and out of all the apartment buildings. But I say you have to tear up some parts of the foam that have not been installed correctly. You have to do some work on the houses and you have to leave the houses in such a state that the houses can be certified as safe, not only for the current occupants but for any other occupants, with a guarantee that the government will take the house over if it is not proven safe.

• (1750)

There could be some kind of insurance deductible provision that would make some sense, so that people would not take advantage of the government. At least that would be a guarantee to those who invested in a piece of real estate and who have been expropriated by fear or by the kind of information

Urea Formaldehyde Insulation Act

published by this government, a situation that has wiped out and destroyed the savings of many of our citizens.

This is a very serious problem, Mr. Speaker. We have people who rely on the government to certify the quality of a product and then find they cannot rely on the government because the government certification does not mean anything. Then we have a situation where people cease to trust their government. There was nothing that required the government to certify UFFI. The government did not have to certify it. The government could have said, "caveat emptor", let the buyer beware, and could have refrained from commenting one way or the other on this insulation. Indeed, the government could have said it would not even help to cover the cost of insulation. It could have said, "Do it on your own, do what you want." They probably would have been better off. Perhaps the government will learn something from this effort to improve, from this effort to certify and this effort to proclaim as good. Sometimes when you lead people down the garden path, it costs you money. That is where we are now. These people were misled by their government, they were misled by a program initiated by their government. These people have the right to look to their government that certified the program, that advertised the program, the government that indeed financed the program, to come good.

The government has no right to say that the provinces should bear their share. What province certified UFFI? If there was a province that did so, it should come clean, too, and pay. But the provinces did not get into the act at all. For the government to say it can only go this far because the provinces won't join in, that has got to be the worst line. Why should the provinces join in? After all, it was this government that certified the product, against the advice it had received; it was this government that promoted the product.

Mr. Ouellet: No, never.

Mr. Blenkarn: You did, you promoted the product. You certified the people who installed it in the first place.

Mr. Ouellet: No.

Mr. Blenkarn: As a matter of fact, right now your own program even says that you will not allow who ever installed the stuff before to take it out. I do not know why. There were people who were insulation contractors and got into the business of installing UFFI and who are put out of business now. Part of the application process that this minister has issued provides that if a person ever installed UFFI, anybody who is a contractor or a labourer or whatever, cannot be licensed under the minister's program under this bill. Hah! What discrimination that is! That is what you did. You certified the people who had put it in.

Mr. Ouellet: Never, that is not true.

Mr. Blenkarn: At least CMHC did. You licensed the contractors.

Mr. Ouellet: That is not true.