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**Tuesday, April 28, 2009**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Leon Benoit**

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Tuesday, April 28, 2009

• (1535)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC)):**  
Good afternoon, everyone.

We have three items to deal with at committee today. The first is to hear from witnesses regarding Bill S-3. Over the years, this committee has dealt with the same piece of legislation twice before. This will be the third time, so I don't think we need a detailed explanation, unless some member of the committee would prefer that. Unless someone disagrees, I'd prefer a shortened version.

The second item on the agenda is to go through this bill clause by clause with the experts from the department. If we get that finished, the third issue is to go through the main estimates for 2009-10. Certainly it is the responsibility of this committee, and at the last meeting the member from the New Democratic Party had asked that we do that.

That's the agenda for today. We can get right to business.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Thursday, April 2, 2009, we are considering Bill S-3, An Act to amend the Energy Efficiency Act. In this first hour—and beyond, if necessary, to at least be present at the committee—from the Department of Natural Resources, we have Carol Buckley, director general of the office of energy efficiency, and John Cockburn, director, equipment division. Thank you both very much for being here.

Please go ahead with your presentation on the bill. Then we'll go to clause-by-clause study. If there are any questions resulting from your presentation, we'll certainly go to them first.

**Ms. Carol Buckley (Director General, Office of Energy Efficiency, Department of Natural Resources):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the committee for having us before you. We are indeed cognizant that this has been before this committee twice before, and I will make my remarks fairly brief.

To remind you, the Energy Efficiency Act from 1992 gives the Minister of Natural Resources the power to establish regulations to eliminate the worst-performing energy-using goods from the marketplace, to promote energy efficiency in general, and to require labelling of certain products. What we are doing with amendments to the Energy Efficiency Act is seeking to broaden the powers of the minister to set regulations for energy efficient products, and also to strengthen the commitment of this government to energy efficiency and all the benefits that brings.

I thought I would speak very briefly to the amendments included in Bill S-3. There are seven, and I won't go into any details on them unless you have a question.

We're asking for the amended act to allow the government to regulate classes of products defined by similar characteristics rather than just individual products. Things that operate in standby mode might be viewed as a class of products that we would like to regulate together. The amendments would permit standards to be based on products according to their intended use, so there would perhaps be differentiation depending on climatic conditions in which windows and doors would be used. As well, the amendments would allow products that affect or control energy consumption to be regulated, in addition to those products that use energy.

Next, there is an amendment to address the potential stockpiling of non-compliant products, given the way the act is currently worded.

Then the amendments address some concerns that the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations raised with respect to whether we have the full authority to gain all the information we need for keeping companies compliant with the act in terms of information about importing goods.

Then we are looking for amendments around the labelling provisions so that we can stipulate the content of the label, not simply the manner and form of the label. That's very important if the government wishes to tell Canadians something about the energy use of a product.

Finally, there is a requirement for the government to report regularly to Parliament with respect to the stringency and the comprehensiveness of the regulations.

I'd like to point out that we are incorporating the reporting element in particular in these amendments. There is also a strengthened preamble. These items are responses to comments the opposition made in previous rounds of amendments to the Energy Efficiency Act.

That's all I will say, apart from finishing by saying that we have had no substantive comments by industry, by manufacturers, or by importers with respect to the amendments we proposed. They understand them. Typically we give them adequate time to deal with standards when we establish them, and they have no issues with the amendments to the Energy Efficiency Act proposed here.

There is not a lot of awareness from the public with respect to the Energy Efficiency Act. They have more awareness with respect to some of the standards in particular, but there's general support for labelling and for having information available to the public.

The provinces and territories recognize and appreciate our leadership, particularly those that like to put in place their own regulations to complement the federal ones.

That is the end of my formal address. My colleagues and I would be delighted to take your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Are there questions for the department officials?

Mr. Tonks, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Is there any relation with respect to the percentage of imports from the United States, or wherever, that come under the provisions of the act? Is there any analysis of that, and then recommendations?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** All goods that are covered by the standards and that are either manufactured in Canada and shipped between provinces or imported into Canada are covered by the regulations, so the regulations will apply to whatever portion is imported from the United States. I can't give you specific numbers because we currently have 34 products covered by the regulations, and at the end of our four-year program term we will have added another 20 to that list.

Perhaps it's something John can answer. We might be able to answer for some of the larger categories, but for many of the products there are no manufacturing capacities in Canada. For example, we don't have a manufacturing capacity for domestic white goods—the stove, the fridge, and so forth—so in that case they would be 100% imported. Some large portion would come from the United States, but not exclusively so.

• (1540)

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Within the context of the discussion we've had about our relationship with the United States, are automobiles covered through the act?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** We are not covering automobiles at this point in time. The government has made the decision to cover automobiles under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** So it's separate legislation.

Is there an ongoing coordination? I'm focusing more on the United States than on other countries. I recognize that we have imports from other countries, but we recognize the special relationship, and it's a rather sensitive issue right now. Is there an ongoing coordination with respect to legislation in the United States and Canada?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Absolutely. Given that we are not a producer of many of these goods in all of the categories, John here has a very good relationship with his counterparts in the United States, and has had for many years. I consider it will only grow stronger as our interest in strengthening our regulatory role increases, just as it appears likely to increase south of the border. We have a strong foundation of working with the Americans, so we are harmonized to the extent that it makes sense.

In some cases it makes sense climatically for them to have more stringent cooling requirements and for us to have more stringent heating equipment requirements, but it's something John puts a great deal of effort into, and it's not restricted to the United States. He has the same relations with countries around the world, and he keeps abreast of all of the regulatory proposals coming forward so that we

make sure we don't miss anything in Canada. We understand how we could profit by what others might be thinking, and we share the ideas that we are moving forward on.

However, the Americans are probably the most important partner. Is that a fair statement?

**Mr. John Cockburn (Director, Equipment Division, Department of Natural Resources):** That's fair.

It's also a good thing if you are a proponent of standards. The United States has a very vigorous regime of energy efficiency standards, so by harmonizing, which makes sense from a trade perspective, we're also getting a lot of the benefits of the energy efficiency standards without infringing on any trade relationships. It works both ways there.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** I understand that close relationship, but I understand this bill calls for a review every four years. Is that correct?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Yes. We'd be reporting to Parliament every three years, and then after the fourth year there would be a report on the stringency of our regime vis-à-vis the North American context.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** If anything with respect to that coordination indicated there was a problem, what is the process you use? Do you report through this committee to Parliament? How would the remediation take place if there was a problem?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** The current Energy Efficiency Act already has an annual reporting requirement. The report is provided to both Houses of Parliament. The intent of the provisions in the amendment are that after an initial period of four years, and then every three years, we would be reporting on the stringency and scope of the standards in that energy efficiency report. Then the parliamentarians would have an opportunity to draw their conclusions and make the points they'd like to make on that report.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Tonks.

Go ahead, please, Madame Brunelle.

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** I am studying this bill for the first time. I am new to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources. I hope that I am not going to prolong the conversation unduly.

If I am not mistaken, this bill applies to all classes of manufactured products?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** It applies to all classes of products imported to Canada that cross interprovincial borders.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** So that means that all the products that we import from China would have to comply with these same safety standards?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Yes, that is correct.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** I notice that there are quite significant fines for violators. Who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with these standards? Who does the checking? So many products enter the country.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** The people who have to comply are those who supply the products covered by the legislation.

All the requirements in the legislation are set out in the regulations. Natural Resources Canada has a group of people responsible for ensuring compliance to the regulations.

• (1545)

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** How, specifically, do you go about it? Do inspectors go into stores to ensure that the standards are being met? How is that done?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Sometimes, people go and check markets like that.

But it is primarily about checking imports. We have already discussed the ways in which many products are imported. We have an agreement with the customs service, and documentation showing compliance with the regulations is required for all products entering Canada from the United States or Europe.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** As consumers are more and more demanding when it comes to saving energy, will our standards apply automatically? Is studying the report that the minister has to prepare every four years the way to find out if we are still current?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** We normally review the regulations regularly. There is no pre-determined period, but when a product's efficiency changes, we watch the markets and we conduct tests to see if a new standard is warranted. If it is, we begin a process to revise the standards.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** Thank you.

**Ms. France Bousant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Can I ask a question if I have a little time left?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Bousant, go ahead.

[Translation]

**Ms. France Bousant:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It mentions satellite set top boxes here. What the heck are they? Among the regulated products, we have commercial washing machines, dishwashers, fluorescent and incandescent lamps and battery chargers, but also satellite set top boxes. I was wondering what that is.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** I think it is a device that controls your television signal. It sits on top of your television set. A satellite set top box.

**Ms. France Bousant:** Like a battery charger or some kind of booster? Is that it?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** It is a part of your cable or satellite system and it sends the signals into your TV set.

**Ms. France Bousant:** I was not here when the bill was studied. I am a new girl too. I am always telling people that I am the new kid on the block.

In the whole area of energy efficiency, have you discussed the possibility of expanding the use of freight trains, and commuter trains for passengers?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** I am sorry; I do not know what you mean by "train".

**Ms. France Bousant:** Using trains is a way to help reduce greenhouse gases. When 75 containers are on a train, there are 75 fewer trucks on the road.

Have you looked at the merits of improving the railways, both passenger trains and freight trains?

[English]

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Under the auspices of this act, but otherwise outside the act, we provide advice to companies to improve the energy efficiency of their transport.

[Translation]

But that is not part of this bill.

**Ms. France Bousant:** Okay; that answers my question.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Bousant.

[English]

Mr. Cullen, go ahead.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

A couple of my questions are very specific to the bill, and a couple more are on the process that got us here. Maybe I'll start with the general questions.

This is the third viewing of this bill. It has taken quite a while. Has it simply been the parliamentary calendar that has stopped us to this point? The reason I ask is not to cast aspersions or anything like that, but just to understand our process in looking for the next product efficiency bill. In the process that got us to this point, are there any lessons learned that would expedite work in the future? Strictly because electronics and energy efficiency and all those things change so quickly, it can't take the Canadian Parliament three full tries before we get through some of these things.

• (1550)

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** I think it really has been the calendar, because we've been essentially ready with these amendments twice previously.

However, we haven't been sitting idle and waiting for the amendments. In December of 2008, John was able to publish new and more stringent regulations for 11 products, and he and his group are hard at work on another 20 that will come forward within the next two years, so we ran a double track. While we were trying to make these improvements to the Energy Efficiency Act itself, the regular work of improving the efficiency of the regulations and moving on to more stringent regulations just kept continuing. That work has kept pace regardless.

We weren't able to use the new amended features of the act, as they never got passed, but we have been able to use all of the existing features of the act to continue to improve the efficiency of products.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** The government is preparing either those regulations or just the changes that you put earlier in the bill. We have seen the effect of unintended consequences when we improve an efficiency or we force a certain thing, and we then regulate a bunch of waste. Canadians then will discard one thing for another.

Does the government ever set up a complementary waste consideration when looking through to new products they're commanding? Product shifting goes on in the marketplace, regardless, because people want different TVs, radios, and computers. But I know that some companies are starting to engage more in the cradle-to-grave considerations, and Japan has always led the way.

Do we ever put an act like this together and at the same time say we have to reconsider any regulations or rules around the manufacturing process to consider the new waste that will be created by such an act? It is not intended, but it is an effect.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** We don't do so directly with respect to the regulations we bring in, because the regulations typically are targeted on replacement products. We don't encourage people to throw away TVs or whatever, but it can benefit people. Some consumers say they should get rid of an old fridge, for instance, because it's really old and really inefficient, and the regulations will help them choose a more efficient one.

In some of our voluntary programs, particularly the ones we mount in collaboration with utilities and similar agencies, we are very interested in seeing those kinds of implications, because we are trying to encourage people to get rid of those old fridges sooner. Largely programs like that will be mounted by the agencies on the ground in the provinces, such as the utilities. You'll notice that in Ontario and British Columbia, for instance, there are very successful and widespread fridge take-back programs, and that comes with a certain moral support, of course.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Let me step to a bit of a tangential point, but an important one. Does the government ever consider trying to affect the manufacturing process? It is one thing to require a computer or a fridge to be more efficient, but there's a second addition that some countries have looked at. They are saying that when you're designing your manufacturing process, you also have to consider the moment when the product is no longer needed.

Although it's not so much the North American automakers as it is others, we've seen in the automobile sector that just the way they apply paint can make it easier when the car needs to be deconstructed and reused or reborn in some other form. Does the government ever go along those tracks at Natural Resources Canada? Do we ever say not only to make the device more efficient, but also to consider the overall waste impacts?

I'm a bit sorry to take us on this tangent, but...although you can make a fridge 10% more efficient, the actual overall net recovery time for the environment could be 15 years by the time you recoup—say, just on greenhouse gas emissions—the benefit of the more efficient fridge as opposed to holding onto the old one. Do you follow me?

I'm not explaining it in the proper terms. The waste component can't be forgotten. It's not simply about making a radio 10% more efficient if it doesn't affect the other side of the equation.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** The answer to your question is no, in terms of environmental producer responsibilities for products and total life cycle. There are other requirements out there, more so within the provincial realm because it is a shared jurisdiction and the provinces are more active. Ontario has embarked on a process right now, for instance, on producer responsibility and extending that.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Yes, it's interesting. Perhaps for the committee's future consideration.... I know it's a shared jurisdiction, but because this bill deals with the importation and the cross-border element of products, that is a power the federal government has that Ontario doesn't. Well, it does, but not to the same effect.

I have a question around that, the government's capacity to actually block inefficient products from coming into the country. I don't see anything proposed in here around the levying of fines. What is the stick that's offered up if an importer starts to bring in products that fall below the standards the minister eventually sets?

• (1555)

**Mr. John Cockburn:** The provisions in the Energy Efficiency Act, with respect to contraventions of the requirements, are actually quite strong.

I think it's section 26, John. This is our legal counsel—

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Perhaps I can frame the question in a better way. Do you feel confident with the government's ability to apply the penalties required to actually meet the standards?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Yes, I do. I think we probably have the strongest enforcement regime of any country that applies standards.

In response to the previous question, we talked about how we control the borders and our relationship with the Canada Border Services Agency. In Canada, every product or model of product that's imported must go through a process to indicate that it's compliant. We have extensive reporting, some of which is strengthened by the amendments we were talking about here today. We have third-party verification. As much as we're all familiar with electrical products, they are verified as being safe by the CSA or by UL. We have a similar kind of requirement with respect to energy efficiency. We have dedicated staff, whose principal function is to examine marketplaces. Those don't exist in other places.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I have one final, short question.

Again, I know there are not a lot of details around the standards you're actually going to apply. But there's been much made of the so-called “vulture electronics” or “predatory power” that's just drawn off the grid as components stay.

Has the ministry given any consideration to limits when setting these guidelines? Some of these power draws are incredible, particularly on the television side, but on some other products as well.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Yes, there are two points to that question. The answer is yes, absolutely. As Carol mentioned, within the body of these amendments is the power to define a product in classes. One of the ways we certainly can define a product is if it consumes power in standby mode. So all consumer electronics.... Conceivably, we could implement a standard that would affect all of them in one fell swoop, such that this particular type of energy use shall be limited to one watt.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Sorry to take up the time here, Mr. Chair.

But just to understand, has any sort of standard been set? Has any standard been contemplated for that limit, putting a cap on that?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** We are looking at absolute numbers. There are complexities with using such a broad brush. We'll have to be quite active defining exceptions.

The second point to that is, as we speak, we are in a consultation process on five consumer electronic products—digital, video, TVs, printers—to establish a standard. That will limit standby power consumption in 2012 to one watt. That's the level we're talking about. We're getting some push-back, but we're talking about it.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I'm sure you are.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cullen.

Now we'll go to the government side. I think Mr. Allen is first.

**Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have three questions, actually, with respect to the spirit of the bill and some of the conversations, and very specifically to the clauses in the bill. The clause that deals with interprovincial trade and importation states, in general, that no dealer shall, for the purpose of sale or lease, ship an energy-using product from one province to another province, or import into Canada, unless the product complies with the standard.

The first thing is, are there any jurisdictional issues with respect to cross-provincial movement of these goods, and specifically, do the provinces and territories regulate any of these usages? That's my first question.

The second one is, why is this an issue? You talk about cross-provincial when this is a national standard. We're a national standard, yet you're talking.... How could someone actually move something across provinces if we get a national standard?

And the third one is, can you comment a little bit about the stockpiling change? It seems to me there are probably all kinds of people out there who'd probably want to try to save things, such as light bulbs, in their basements. I just want you to comment on the stockpiling provisions, if there's anything else in there.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** I'll give that a start. Thank you for the question.

John can support me on that. On the last one, on stockpiling, it's oriented to the dealers, not the individual consumers. So if you wanted to stockpile light bulbs, this would not affect you. It was aimed at the seller of the light bulbs, or the importer of the light

bulbs, so they aren't importing light bulbs into this country and sending them to another province where they could be stockpiled non-compliant with the regulation. It is not dealing with the individual consumer. It is dealing with the marketplace, where there's a potential with the existing bill, with the existing wording of the act, for companies to import non-compliant goods into Canada and transfer them to another province, and we want there to be no importation or export of non-compliant goods.

It doesn't address the consumer. We know some consumers are worried in particular about light bulbs, and this would not affect them if they want to stock some light bulbs on their own. We're just working from the bottom up.

With respect to the first one, five provinces have their own regulatory regimes. B.C. and Ontario are particularly aggressive; their powers extend to the manufacture and sale within a province and our powers deal with importing into the country or trans-boundary crossing of goods. The powers are different, and together they will capture everything in the entire country.

The federal powers alone will give us a good national program that will capture almost everything, given that most of the things we cover are imported. I guess there would be the odd case of some provinces who aren't regulating, where there is manufacture and sale within that province. Then our regulations wouldn't address those, but that would be a very small percentage of the entire number of goods covered.

With respect to there being any issues, probably John would have an example or two. In general, we work very closely with our provincial and territorial colleagues on this file. In fact, we have a subcommittee of a federal-provincial steering community on energy efficiency that is dedicated to six end uses and regulation or the associated voluntary labelling programs that go with them to promote energy efficiency. Any issues that might arise tend to get worked out between officials in terms of what the different jurisdictions want.

I think that answered all three questions. Did you have anything to add?

• (1600)

**Mr. John Cockburn:** To supplement what you already said, one of the questions was why cross-provincial borders. That's a federal domain. Those are the powers of the federal domain we use to support this legislation—interprovincial shipment and importation. Provincial regulatory regimes regulate the internal markets of the provinces.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** My point is that if this is a national standard, then by virtue of your national standards you're preventing the foreign products that are coming in below standard. By definition, you've controlled the interprovincial movement anyway.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** I'll give you an example of how it works. The Government of British Columbia was very interested in having standards—here you have an active regime—and implemented a standard for windows. As you may or may not know, there are large companies that make windows, but there are also very small local companies that make windows.

With that particular product, a provincial standard would probably be more effective than a federal standard.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allen.

Mr. Trost, please.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** I have a couple of questions on different topics.

First of all, I'm sort of curious about the importation from abroad. I'll start out with a bit of an analogy to a situation with the U.S. In U.S. trade law they have something called COOL, country of origin labeling, which has to do with meat and stuff like that. It is officially for better standards, safety, etc., but it really is just a trade impediment harassment to keep Canadian beef and pork out.

I understand the intent of this legislation is never to do anything like that. But looking at it from another country's perspective, could they complain to WTO or some other organization that the Canadian government is using these standards to keep their products out? For example, the Canadian product drew 1 watt, while an international competitor drew 1.2 watts, and we set the standard as 1.1. It may be hypothetical. I don't think any minister has any intent to use the bill that way, but from another country's perspective, it could just be viewed as trade harassment.

Has there been any thought given to how we would deal with those situations, or the possibility of them, and whether this bill would have any problems being trade compliant in those situations?

• (1605)

**Mr. John Cockburn:** The question as to the implications of our regulatory regime from a trade perspective has been posed before, and we have talked on particular issues with Foreign Affairs on that. With that there are two particular aspects that arise. The first is that you're generally okay if you treat everybody the same, so we don't provide national treatment for any of these products. It doesn't matter where they come from. We can demonstrate that a one-watt standard is a one-watt standard for something Korean, and it's a one-watt standard for something that's traded from Brantford to Montreal. That is the primary thing that the trade legislation is trying to make sure doesn't happen.

The second thing is that within most trade legislation—and I'm sure our counsel will correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm pretty sure about it—this legislation generally falls under environmental legislation. The rationale is greenhouses gases. And then there are exceptions with respect to countries having different regimes or different standards to achieve their own environmental perspectives.

So on those two cases, we have a pretty strong case, and we're not too worried about it.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Good.

My second question has to deal with clause 6, about having to compare things with those in Mexico and the United States. Now, as I read the clause, it's more for demonstrative purposes. There's no real change of Canadian standards, if, say, we're different from Mexico or Chihuahua or who knows whatever else we may be comparing ourselves to.

My question is, assuming I've read that correctly, do we have any idea how much this would cost? How does the minister “demonstrate the extent”? When you say “demonstrate”, you're not talking to a lawyer here; you're talking to a geophysicist. I could use that word flexibly, and it could drive the costs either up or down. I'm a little concerned this could end up being spent bureaucracy money, useless stuff, with which people could be doing more efficient projects. How are we going to keep this from being a waste of money and just sort of a useless PR exercise?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** I think we're always happy to put the largest share of our budgets into the effective work, as opposed to the monitoring and scrutiny of that work, but a certain amount of evaluation is necessary to ensure you're doing the best job you can. In this case, it helps us to just put in place the best regime that we think we need in Canada. We find it very helpful to compare ourselves internationally. There are some things to help us do this in a very cost-effective fashion. In some cases, for example, more broadly, the International Energy Agency does do reviews of different instruments, such as standards and regulations, and we can use that very cost-effectively without having to do the work ourselves to compare ourselves.

In this particular situation, comparing on a North American basis, some of the metrics are very straightforward. We deal with our American and Mexican colleagues on a regular basis, so in order to draw the information together amongst the three countries would not be a particularly difficult or expensive task. We think it would be one that would pay off significantly in order that we understand the context in which our regime sits in the North American continent.

So without being able to quote you figures or amounts, I can tell you it would definitely be a fairly modest study.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** So you think this would be cheaper? How many Mexican states are there? There are 50 U.S. states, plus—I don't know, what—30-some Mexican states or something. That's 80 different entities. And California is always doing some kooky, nutty thing about the environment, some way or thing. It's just a crazy state.

**An hon. member:** Can we quote you on that?

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** You can quote me on that one. For the record, California's just a crazy place for energy and environment policy.

**An hon. member:** The Conservative government says so.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** The Conservative government doesn't. An MP from Saskatoon says so.

I was just wondering if there might be some more efficient way or it might be more efficient to compare similar climate zones, because, frankly, the climate's a little bit different down in Acapulco from what it is in Saskatchewan for window efficiency.



**Ms. Carol Buckley:** But we would be working through the federal governments, who often have a good view, just as we do, of what's happening in Canada. Despite the fact that we don't run the regulatory system in B.C., we have quite a good idea of what they're doing, so working federal government to federal government, you can share quite a bit of information. I wouldn't suggest that we'd be out there on a regular basis doing a survey of each and every American and Mexican state to get a good view of what the respective regimes look like.

The second point, with respect to climate, affects certain things, certainly furnaces and air conditioning equipment. But all of the electronics that we plug into the wall, which John was mentioning, the phantom power users, are pretty similar products, whether you're using them in Acapulco or Canada. So in some cases climate has no impact whatsoever.

• (1610)

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Understood.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Just to correct a perception there, certainly the intent of the wording per the drafting instructions—we had a discussion on this when their legislation was being developed—is that it's not the individual states and Mexico, it's the United States and Mexico.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** So it's just the national.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** It's just the national standards regime. We do have arrangements, through the North American Energy Working Group, with our standards counterparts in Mexico and the U.S.

The second point I might add to Carol's response is that we're in the business of standards. We do this, and then the government counts on standards to meet its environmental goals. Under that mandate, we're actively looking at standards in other places, because harmonization is a big deal.

In terms of going to the expense, a lot of the cost of making this report is going to be defrayed against our opportunities assessment, if you want to call it that, to determine where the next portfolio standards are going to come from.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Since you're doing most of it anyway, it really doesn't cost much; a couple of summer students and you're done.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Yes.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** I won't hold you to that one specifically.

All I will say is that I'm glad to know that I can stockpile all my light bulbs in the basement for the future.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** We won't come looking for you.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Only when I set up my dealership at the back of my yard.

**The Chair:** Mr. Trost, you weren't suggesting that the committee travel to Mexico to study this, were you?

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Actually, Mr. Chair, I would suggest that you could go to Mexico and I'll go to California.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Allen, you had another question.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** I would just like to follow up on one of John's comments.

If there are five provinces with these standards that we have, is it a possibility that on the interprovincial side, the province could use this as an interprovincial trade barrier to prevent things from crossing from one to another, if one takes a higher standard than another?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** I can't see how they would use the federal law as an interprovincial trade barrier. They might conceivably use their own standards. They govern their own markets, so if they wanted to restrict access to their markets, and they had a firm that produced highly efficient products, it would be within their domain to execute the desire through that legislation. Presumably, they would then enter into a discussion about interprovincial barriers.

I think it would be quite separate, then, from what the federal legislation might bring up.

**The Chair:** I think the last questioner is Mr. Anderson....

Oh, Mr. Hiebert, go ahead.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's a pleasure to be here and to hear more about this particular bill.

My attention has been drawn to clause 5 in the bill. It would amend paragraph 20(1)(a) in the act, and reads as follows:

prescribing as an energy-using product any manufactured product, or class of manufactured products, that is designed to operate using electricity, oil, natural gas or any other form or source of energy or that affects or controls energy consumption;

That is a very broad definition—anything that “affects or controls energy consumption”.

There's a company very close to my constituency that's called Entech. They sell a very sophisticated paint product that has an R-24 rating. It's basically like insulation that lasts three to five times as long as paint. It's used by NASA.

This paint would affect or control energy consumption. Does this bill have an impact on their product?

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Well, let's see; it would have to be shipped across an interprovincial border, and it would have to be a product that is for sale—

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** It is.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** —and that affects energy use.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** We'd have to write a standard against it, but the amendment would bring it into the scope of the Energy Efficiency Act should we determine that there were material savings and there was enough variation in that kind of product in the marketplace to warrant bringing a standard into effect.

Just because the amended act would allow such a product to be in its scope doesn't mean it would be worth our while to get into the marketplace. If all the products like that were similar, we wouldn't need to address it.

But could we get in and regulate that people use that paint instead of other paints?

• (1615)

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** That would be one of my questions.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Theoretically, I think, it means we could.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** Theoretically, they could. It would be subject to a regulatory process in which the scientific claims and the cost-benefit analysis and the energy savings would all be subject to an open and public consultation and analysis.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** As far as I know, they're the only ones that produce this particular product. So if you were to pass regulations, they would have a monopoly on paint, with such an R rating.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** But that would be part of our market analysis in terms of what the regulation would do to the marketplace. Were we to say that only this paint makes it in Canada and there are no other suppliers of it, that would be an enormous part of our market assessment, if you're creating a monopoly for a company.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** How many employees are you going to need to actually evaluate all the different products out there, to regulate, based on this bill?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** The bill doesn't tell us that we have to regulate everything that falls into our scope. We're two years into a four-year program cycle right now. What John does, as we head into a cycle, is evaluate the marketplace and look at the most material energy savings from products that fall into the scope of the act, and by doing a technical, an economic, and a marketplace assessment, we'll then propose which products we propose go forward for improved stringency of regulation or brand-new regulation.

Right now, paint is nowhere near the top of the list that we're currently working on. We're working on a current list now as part of this four-year cycle, and John is already thinking about the next list. It's a long list, but you're only going to carve off the ones near the top of it because we only have a budget to do 30 regulations in this four-year period.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I'm just thinking in terms of the number of people whom you would need to effectively administer this act.

I want to share the balance of my time with my colleague, because I know he has some questions as well.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Russ asked most of them, but I just want to follow up on the exception item you pointed out earlier. Automobiles are exempted from this.

Can you just go over again how you're going to exempt, or what would be the factors that would lead to an exemption, an exception, if you want to call it that, or that would lead to being included? You talked about that a bit, but I'd just like that cleared up for now.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Excuse me if I inferred that automobiles were exempt. The act gives the Government of Canada power to regulate things that fall within the description of the scope. The government has made a decision to regulate automobiles using a

different instrument. In fact, the government made a decision to switch instruments, from the Motor Vehicle Fuel Consumption Standards Act to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Just as a matter of interest, though, Mr. Cullen talked about deconstruction and taking the cars apart later or whatever. This could still give you the ability to regulate some parts and components of that, right? You're talking about energy use and stereo systems, or all the electronic systems that are in there.

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Yes, that's right, but just because the act gives you the authority to establish a standard doesn't mean you have to. We choose—the government chooses. The government “may” establish standards. So right now the government has the intent to do 30 products in a four-year period. None of those include the automobile and none of those include paint.

Maybe the next time through some of those things will make the list, but they will go through a policy decision-making process where the government decides where it's going to establish standards and where it's not.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Can you just go over, then, what kinds of things are on that list of 30?

**Ms. Carol Buckley:** Sure, I'll let John respond.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I guess the one people have brought up with me is whether we're going to be regulating shower heads, and maybe we already do that, I don't know.

**Mr. John Cockburn:** No, we don't.

**Mr. David Anderson:** They just changed them in our apartment building, so now I can stand under hot air while I'm trying to take a shower, but anyway, I'm just wondering if that's....

**The Chair:** Too much information, Mr. Anderson.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. John Cockburn:** I could provide you with a list. Would that be the best way of dealing with that, rather than read you the 30 energy-using products that are on our current agenda?

**Mr. David Anderson:** Okay, great.

**The Chair:** Are there any further questions for the witnesses before we get into clause-by-clause? They will remain at the table for clause-by-clause.

Seeing none, are we ready to start clause-by-clause?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** All right. We have our legislative clerk here, ready to go through it.

Pursuant to Standing Order 75(1), consideration of the preamble is postponed until the end, as is normal, so we'll start with clause 1.

(Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive agreed to)

(On clause 5—*Information to be provided by dealers*)

• (1620)

**The Chair:** Madame Bonsant.

[Translation]

**Ms. France Bonsant:** Mr. Chair, I would like paragraph 5(2)(b) on page three of the French version of the bill to be translated into French. The paragraph is in English. There is a mistake in translation.

[English]

**The Chair:** That's a very good point. It's in English on both sides.

**Mr. Wayne Cole (Procedural Clerk):** It's just an amendment to the English text of the bill.

**The Chair:** Oh, it is only an amendment to the English text. The French text remains the same. It's to coordinate, to bring the two into agreement.

Thank you.

[Translation]

**Ms. France Bonsant:** What is the explanation?

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Craig or Mr. Cockburn.

[Translation]

**Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC):** For Ms. Bonsant's information, it is probably that there was no error in the French version, so it does not need to be amended. It is the English text that needs to be amended. It is a language problem.

[English]

**The Chair:** That's what I indicated.

[Translation]

**Mr. Royal Galipeau:** For once, the French was well done.

**Ms. France Bonsant:** I heard a number of explanations. It is fine; I get it.

[English]

**Mr. John Craig (Legal Counsel, Department of Natural Resources):** I'll attempt to answer the question. Paragraph 20(1)(b) of the English version of the act would be amended by removing the word "prescribed" before "classes of energy-using products" to bring it into accordance with the wording in the French version of the act. So there is no need to amend the French version of the act—only the English version.

**The Chair:** Okay. Is that clear?

(Clauses 5 to 8 inclusive agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall the preamble carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the bill carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the chair report the bill to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** We are finished.

**An hon. member:** What about the reprint?

**The Chair:** There is no need for a reprint. There was no amendment. Thank you for that.

All right. Thank you very much to Ms. Buckley, Mr. Cockburn, and Mr. Craig, and to the legislative clerk for being here today for this.

We have the first part of our agenda finished. We will now go to the main estimates for 2009-10 for the Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Cullen, did you have a question, a comment, or a point of order before we get started?

• (1625)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** It's a question—on page 19-6, for those following along at home—around the federal response to the mountain pine beetle infestation.

I don't know if the parliamentary secretary is able to answer. We've done just about everything we can with government—

**The Chair:** Which vote are you referring to?

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** It's under "Total grants", "Contributions". I'm referring to the general estimates document. This is where I found it. On the pages in your general estimates book, it is page 19-6. It's under "Transfer Payments", under "Contributions", which is the second body of moneys. This is the one that begins with "Payments to the Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Resource Revenue Fund".

**The Chair:** Okay, can we start with vote 1? That's in vote 5.

We don't have any witness for this.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** We've tried this with witnesses as well, in a sense trying to get some clarification before we get to the vote from the parliamentary secretary. So I actually haven't phrased the question yet.

Essentially, the Prime Minister came to Prince George a number of years ago and made a commitment towards this fund. The commitment was \$100 million per year for 10 years. I notice this budget deals with just the two we're looking at in the main estimates.

We simply can't find the money. We've put questions on the order paper, questions directly in question period, every bit of research that we can through the Library of Parliament to find out the totals that were committed and the total spent. This is the total commitment, and I see it dropping from approximately \$30.1 million down to \$8.7 million.

I'm wondering if the parliamentary secretary has any notes or any assistance that could help clarify what it is, because as we go through these votes, Chair, I don't know if it's buried somewhere else. I can't even get a—

**The Chair:** Mr. Cullen, our researcher/analyst has referred to a document we got from the Department of Natural Resources on April 7 of this year. It was in response to the minister appearing before this committee. We had asked for some information, and she provided that. It is the first chart in the appendix, and it does have that broken down.

We have a copy here, if you'd like to have it, for fiscal years 2006-07 and 2007-08, estimated 2008-09, and 2009-10 projected—for a total of \$186,719,000.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** So perhaps this is a procedural point then, Chair. I know sometimes we draw on witnesses when they're here and they offer to provide documentation to us as a committee. We've been doing everything we can to get a hold of this one. What is the actual procedure when documents come to the research department, or to you, in terms of distribution? This would have been great to have.

**The Chair:** Mr. Cullen, it was distributed. The clerk, immediately on receipt of these, sends them out to every member of the committee.

The clerk works on behalf of the whole committee. As chair, I work on behalf of the whole committee. On something like that, I'm not even consulted; the clerk just sends it out to everyone. Okay?

•(1630)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Excellent.

I cast no aspersions; I was looking for procedure. I'll yell at my office, then.

**The Chair:** I actually appreciate you bringing that up.

Okay, shall we go to vote 1?

NATURAL RESOURCES

Department

Operating Expenditures

Vote 1—Operating expenditures.....\$700,338,000

**The Chair:** Shall vote 1, in the amount of \$700,338,176, less the amount of \$175,084,544 granted in interim supply, carry?

(Vote 1 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall vote 5 carry?

Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** I'd like to move a motion regarding vote 5:

That vote 5, in the amount of \$456,953,000, less the amount of \$114,238,250 granted in Interim Supply, be reduced by \$250,000 to \$342,464,750.

I'd like to speak to the motion if you find it in order.

**The Chair:** Okay. We had that sent to us in advance, which I appreciate, Mr. Martin.

Is there any discussion on this motion to reduce? It is in order.

Mr. Martin, you want to make some comments.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Yes, please. I would like to introduce and explain the motivation for this.

You'll notice that the flags are flying at half-mast over Parliament Hill today. April 28 is the day of mourning for injured and fallen workers in this country. It's one of the few days that we lower the flags to half-mast.

More people die from asbestos than from all other occupational illnesses or diseases combined. It's not just the highest; all others combined don't add up to the number of people who now die in

Canada due to asbestos. Those figures are even worse in the province of Quebec. Fully 80% of all the people who die from occupational- or industrial-related disease or illness in Quebec now die from the asbestos mined in that province.

I used to work in the asbestos mines. I have a personal interest in this—I should be forthright. I abhor the asbestos industry. It's the tobacco industry's evil twin, in many ways. For over a century both have profited enormously from selling products they've known full well kill people. They do so through tainted research—and this is the point I'm getting to with the Chrysotile Institute—phony science, and intense political lobbying. That triumvirate of influences has kept the tobacco industry and the asbestos industry killing people much longer than they should have. If I had more time I could take us back to the 1920s and 1930s for research documents indicating that all asbestos kills.

I call this money for the Asbestos Institute—it's called the Asbestos Institute in the estimates, even though in recent years it changed its name to the Chrysotile Institute to try to take the stink off asbestos—corporate welfare for corporate serial killers, because in actual fact it is a corporate handout. You might think \$250,000 is not much, but it's only an iota, a fraction, of what the asbestos industry actually receives from the Government of Canada in hard and soft money to not only continue mining in this country, but to export all around the world.

Most people think asbestos is banned in Canada. Nothing could be further from the truth. But it's so harmful and such a carcinogen that no MP should be exposed to a single fibre of it. So we're spending tens of millions of dollars to remove all the asbestos from the Parliament buildings, while at the same time we're exporting 200,000 tonnes per year to third world countries. We can only sell it to developing nations and third world countries because the European Union, Australia, Japan, and almost the entire developed world has banned asbestos in all its forms.

I draw your attention to a letter that was sent to you, Mr. Chairman, today, April 28, 2009, from the Canadian Cancer Society. You may not have seen it, to be fair, because I received it about two o'clock today. It says:

We are writing to you to express our dismay in the fact that this year's Federal budget allocates \$250,000 of federal money to the support of the Chrysotile Institute. We are requesting that the House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources formally address this issue before the approval of budget estimates.

There are only two more paragraphs, if you'll indulge me, Mr. Chairman:

Chrysotile, like all forms of asbestos, is known to cause cancer. The carcinogenicity of all forms of asbestos has been confirmed by both the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the National Toxicology Program in the US. The toxicity of this substance has also recently been reaffirmed by a panel of expert scientists convened by Health Canada in 2008.

The report was just released a few days ago through an access to information request.

It goes on to say:

We are disappointed in the Federal government's continued support of the Chrysotile Institute and are asking the Standing Committee on Natural Resources to recommend that this funding be redirected towards the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to address all aspects of the asbestos issue, including:

• (1635)

It goes through a number of recommendations to deal with the pandemic we've created of asbestos-related disease.

I draw your attention also, Mr. Chairman, to a letter sent to Mr. Alan Tonks, Mr. Bains, and Mr. Regan from the British Columbia and Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council. They will have received these letters in their offices because they were sent April 24.

I used to belong to the Building and Construction Trades Council because I was the head of the carpenters' union, Mr. Chair. There were fourteen members of the Building and Construction Trades Council for the fourteen building trade unions. Three of the fourteen died of asbestos-related disease: the insulator, the painter, and the boiler maker. This construction trades council says:

I write to urge your support for an amendment to remove \$250,000 for the Asbestos Institute from Ministry Estimates. I understand [they are to appear] on April 28th or 30th next week.

Last week Health Canada finally released the findings of the expert panel to study the risks of cancer from asbestos. The suppressed report concluded that "there is a strong relationship of exposure [to asbestos] with lung cancer."

We look to your leadership to stand up for what is right. I urge you to add your voice and...stop funding the industry lobby promoting the export of this dangerous carcinogen.

On behalf of workers and their families that continue to suffer disease and death caused by asbestos I urge your support for the amendment to remove the amount allocated to the Asbestos Institute.

It's signed Wayne Peppard, executive director of the B.C. Building and Construction Trades Council.

I also very briefly, Mr. Chairman, draw your attention to an article in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, published on October 21, 2008. It's rare to have the Canadian Medical Association speak in such plain, direct language. They use an abundance of caution because they know the impact, the weight, given to peer-tested.... They're all peer-reviewed articles published in that journal. It says here:

Canada is more than just a major asbestos exporter. To keep the export industry alive, it has become an avid asbestos cheerleader. Ottawa has poured more than \$19 million into the Chrysotile Institute, an advocacy group formerly called the Asbestos Institute before that name became unfashionable. Along with funds from the Government of Quebec, the institute is dedicated to promoting the safe-use canard and defending the beleaguered mineral from its critics.

I would be able to table any of these articles. What they're pointing out to us is that there is only one agency essentially in the developed world that believes there can be safe use of asbestos, and that is the Chrysotile Institute—and the Government of Canada. This is based on one research paper by one discredited scientist in the employ of the Chrysotile Institute, who maintains not only that there can be safe uses of chrysotile, but he actually maintains that chrysotile is good for you because it triggers the immune system. If you take it into your body, your body is so eager to get it out, that it's like exercising a muscle, flexing your immune system to expel it. That's how crazy this is, Mr. Chairman, but that is the only source. He's not peer-reviewed. There's never been a peer who agreed with David Bernstein.

We do have a list, Mr. Chairman, of 150 doctors, researchers, and scientists who belong to the Collegium Ramazzini, the academic society dedicated to the prevention of occupational diseases, in Rome, Italy. Some 150 PhDs, doctors, scientists, and researchers say chrysotile kills and there is no safe level of exposure and there is no safe use. One discredited charlatan, David Bernstein, says there is a question mark and there is a possibility chrysotile can be used safely.

• (1640)

If I could also draw your attention, Mr. Chair, to the lead editorial in today's *Times Colonist* newspaper in Victoria, British Columbia. "End asbestos support now" is the heading on page A10. It states:

The federal government's inexplicable support of the chrysotile asbestos industry is an appalling example of pandering for votes in the face of scientific proof of the substance's health hazards. Ottawa should recognize the dangers posed by the substance and immediately end its export.

It goes on to point out, Mr. Chair, that the federal government supports the industry with a quarter-million-dollar annual payout to the Chrysotile Institute, an industry-backed group led by Clément Godbout, a former president of the Quebec Federation of Labour.

I'm a former labour leader myself. I know Clément Godbout. He's a traitor to the working class. He's abandoned the best interests of working people and he's gone to work for the dark side, going to peddle something that he knows full well kills workers in this country and elsewhere.

The asbestos mines where I worked in the Yukon territory closed through normal market forces because nobody would buy this stuff any more. The asbestos mines in Timmins, Ontario, and Newfoundland and everywhere else in the country closed through normal market forces. The mines in Quebec are kept open inexplicably in the face of all reason and logic.

It goes on to say that:

The institute's website claims chrysotile asbestos can be used safely and that it only sells to manufacturers who comply, or have committed to comply, with national safety regulations. It ignores the fact that developing countries are the least likely to have, much less enforce, national safety regulations. In reality, we are exporting disease and death.

This is not rhetoric by me. This is the *Times Colonist* newspaper.

Mr. Chair, in the next few weeks you're going to see a CBC national news documentary by Melissa Fung. She has just come back from India, filming the use of Canadian asbestos in conditions that we know are the norm. People with no health and safety protocols whatsoever are handling Canadian asbestos with their bare hands and tossing it with fibres to create the textiles they use it for. The article continues:

But no recent government has been willing to be the one to shut down the asbestos industry and lose support in vital Quebec ridings—successive Liberal and Conservative governments have continued to fund the institute.

That support has to stop, as do our deadly exports of chrysotile. These practices have tarnished Canada's reputation on the world stage, with no gains except profits for a fading industry.

Better the industry die than one more worker abroad. Ottawa should act immediately.

Mr. Chair, I also draw your attention to a media release dated April 28, 2009, from the Canadian Auto Workers. The CAW calls on the Canadian government to stop the chrysotile funding, the asbestos Chrysotile Institute. I don't want to repeat myself, so I'll simply point that out.

There's also a news article associated with the editorial in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* that deals largely with the Chrysotile Institute's role in not only promoting the sale of asbestos with the Government of Canada, but undermining the efforts of other countries to curb its use.

This was the truly shocking thing, Mr. Chair. When the Government of Korea and the Government of Thailand wanted to put warning signs on bales of Canadian asbestos, Canada went to the WTO to stop them from putting the skull and crossbones or any warning labels about caution on that product because they said, "This product is not even listed on the Rotterdam Convention." That's the United Nations list of harmful, hazardous materials. The reason asbestos is not listed in the list of hazardous chemicals in the Rotterdam Convention is because year after year after year Clément Godbout and the Chrysotile Institute go there and sabotage the Rotterdam Convention. I've been there. I've seen how they work the room and twist the arms of small countries. The Rotterdam Convention operates on consensus. All it takes is one country to say nay and that hazardous material does not go on the list of hazardous chemicals.

This is appalling, in my view, Mr. Chair. The Chrysotile Institute, on their own website, says that they've had trade junkets promoting Canadian asbestos, 160 different junkets in 60 different countries at Canadian embassies. So our trade commissioners and our Canadian foreign embassies are globe-trotting propagandists for the asbestos industry.

• (1645)

There is no other Canadian commodity that has enjoyed that level of promotion, not softwood lumber, not Canadian wheat. No commodity gets pandered to like asbestos. There's nothing even close—160 trade junkets in 60 different countries. It's inexplicable and it's embarrassing, Mr. Chairman.

I also draw your attention to 24—I will table this—editorials in 24 different newspapers in the last 12 months calling for Canada to end its shameful record of pushing asbestos and dumping it into the third world. Here are just the headlines alone: "Medical journals rip exporting of asbestos; Ottawa accused of 'suppressing' danger report"; chrysotile asbestos, "Canada's double standard", from a *Globe and Mail* editorial; "Feds hiding dangers, experts say" of the government-funded panel; "Medical journal urges export ban, decries 'death-dealing charade'", of Canada's asbestos policy, from the *Montreal Gazette*, front page, A1.

"Death by Canada", by Keith Spicer from Paris, France, was published on page A12 of the *Ottawa Citizen*. This has to do with France, you see. When France wanted to ban asbestos, Canada went to the WTO and fought them saying they can't ban asbestos because it would interfere with our ability to trade. I know the lawyer who represented France. Fortunately, France won and Canada lost, so the people of France are asbestos-free. They're simply left with the

legacy of trying to clean up the mess that a century of asbestos use caused.

The *Ottawa Citizen*, April 21, "Immoral Exports", reads:

For too long the federal government, to its shame, has denied and avoided evidence about the dangers of chrysotile asbestos, a product that Canada mines and exports around the world.

Much of what this says would be repetitious if I read it, but I put it on the record because I would like to table that as evidence for this initiative.

**The Chair:** Mr. Martin, how much more information do you have? I hear the repetition in your message, and I'm just wondering how much longer you're going to go on here. We could get to a vote on this any time, if you're ready.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I'd say less than five minutes, if that's all right, Mr. Chairman. I find it very hard not to be repetitious.

Perhaps I could explain the impact on developing nations in the third world or how Canada's reputation is being sullied by our export of asbestos to developing nations. One scientist at the recent round of the Rotterdam Convention, which I attended in Rome, said that Canada is unleashing the equivalent of 1,000 Bhopals into India every year. Our largest customer is now India, into which we're dumping our asbestos. The impact in the number of people affected is like 1,000 of the Bhopal chemical disasters every year going off in slow motion. That's what he said. I think we should be aware of that.

Mr. Chairman, just let me summarize by saying that we are exporting human misery on a monumental scale. It would be an enormous symbolic gesture if this committee—even if it has no authority to ban the use of asbestos or to even comment on whether or not asbestos should be mined in this country—sent a very strong message that it will not tolerate corporate welfare for an organization that is doing so much harm and so little good for Canada.

Even if you don't care about the asbestos issue, there is the notion of handouts, which are \$19 million according to one article. I can prove more. A *Montreal Star* article from the 1980s announced \$32 million, and the heading was "To take the stink off the asbestos industry". So even in the mid-1980s they knew that world opinion had finally turned on the use of asbestos, and Canada started shovelling money into that region of Quebec to try to salvage that industry. It's simply wrong on every level.

India's asbestos time bomb cites the hazard that we're creating with every boatload of asbestos that goes over there, tied to our international trade and tied to our foreign aid. It is an appalling prospect that the beneficiaries of Canada's foreign aid often get cash and a boatload of asbestos as part of the aid sent over to their countries. We are killing the future with asbestos use in Asia. These are bags of Canadian white asbestos from the LAB Chrysotile company, mined in the Thetford Mines region of Quebec. If you can see, that's a more typical example of the way asbestos is handled in that country.

The last thing I'll say is that chrysotile asbestos is hazardous to humans and deadly to the Rotterdam Convention. In our undermining of the consensus process of the Rotterdam Convention, we have put in jeopardy the success of that convention altogether, because we've let commercial and political interests override science in naming which chemicals should be on that list. It's an appalling thing for a country like Canada. Canada is at risk of losing its Boy Scout image in the world because of this promotion of asbestos. The asbestos cartel, truly the face of evil, dines out on Canada's good name by saying that if a nice country like Canada thinks asbestos is okay, then it must be okay. I put it to you that it's not, and I urge this committee to send a message to the government of the day by withholding and withdrawing the funding to the Asbestos Institute in this small but important symbolic gesture.

I urge your support of the motion to remove \$250,000 from vote 5.

That's all. Thank you.

• (1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Martin.

Is there any further discussion on Mr. Martin's motion to reduce vote 5? Seeing none, we'll go to the question.

(Motion negated)

**The Chair:** So we move back to vote 5.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I have a point of order. Is it possible to have that vote recorded?

**The Chair:** We've taken the vote, Mr. Martin. That would have to be asked for before we take the vote.

We'll now go to the original vote 5, unamended.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Department

Vote 5—Grants and contributions.....\$456,953,000

(Vote 5 agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall votes 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 carry?

NATURAL RESOURCES

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited

Vote 10—Payments to Atomic Energy of Canada Limited for operating and capital expenditures.....\$108,691,000

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

Vote 15—Program expenditures.....\$40,670,000

Cape Breton Development Corporation

Vote 20—Payments to the Cape Breton Development Corporation for operating and capital expenditures.....\$73,484,000

National Energy Board

Vote 25—Program expenditures.....\$39,355,000

Northern Pipeline Agency

Vote 30—Program expenditures.....\$244,000

(Votes 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 inclusive agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 inclusive under Natural Resources be reported to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1655)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The only other issue that I know of before the committee today is on the discussion of maybe not carrying forward with Thursday's meeting because the Liberals have their convention starting Wednesday, I understand, in Vancouver. There has been some suggestion that the meeting be moved to immediately follow the passing of the report on the sustainable energy integrated energy systems.

Is there agreement to do that?

Mr. Cullen.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I just want to understand your proposal. Would we just carry that meeting over and have it on another day, or is the meeting essentially lost, Chair?

**The Chair:** We carry it forward and have it as the first meeting following the completion of our debate and passing of the report on integrated energy systems.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I would like to get a sense of things. Sometime within the next two weeks, will that meeting be made back up?

**The Chair:** It could be longer than that, depending on how many meetings we have to discuss the draft report.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** It's for our Liberal colleagues to allow them to go and have this leadership race in Vancouver. Is that what's going on? It's a strange kind of thing to have a race with only one person in it, but I suppose they have to gather and we have to move our meetings and accommodate a one-person race. I suppose we are good enough to do it. I don't know how the other members of the committee feel.

**The Chair:** Is there agreement?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** I see agreement. Thank you very much.

Yes, Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Mr. Chair, as I had indicated to you before, there was a rather large article in the *Sunday Star* this last weekend on integrated energy systems. It talked about some of the points that I was trying to raise when we had the witnesses. It's entitled "Last Chance for Weston, Toronto's Rustbelt", and it's about the great Canadian industries from my area that have moved out of this one particular 65-acre brownfields parcel. It's talking about the history in transportation and so on through the rail, changes in the demographics of the area, and the economy. It's talking about integrated energy systems with respect to replacing those kinds of old manufacturing jobs with the new green economy and so on.

I'd like to refer this to research. I know we're putting our report together, and the research can extract, if applicable, any parts of the article.

They tried to make the point that this should be part of a national, provincial, and local strategy right across the country and that we should be developing these systems with funding mechanisms and so on. I'm not arguing that case right now; I'm just asking if research can take it.

If members are interested in reading the article, it's rather interesting in terms of bringing together some of the themes that we listened to from the witnesses. It brings them together in one article.

**The Chair:** All right. I think that's been agreed to under those conditions.

Seeing no further business, I wish you all the very best at your convention over the weekend.

The meeting is adjourned.

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