

Oral Questions

ance to firms engaging in star wars research as in other defence fields? Will the Canadian Commercial Corporation be the intermediary, and will the RCMP provide security clearance of the classified materials involved?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Government has taken a decision with respect to SDI which reflects what we believe to be the national interest in terms of ongoing research activities, as we have been doing over many years. We intend to co-operate with the United States, as we have in the past, and we hope that that research activity will increase. All these projects are subject to a decision-making process which is in place and will be utilized when any new project comes up for consideration.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I want us all to be very clear. I take it that the Minister of National Defence is saying that the Canadian Government will not give the kind of assistance to star wars related research that it does through the Canadian Commercial Corporation to other defence research projects? Is that explicitly what the Minister of National Defence is saying?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member may take it that we intend to continue our research efforts in co-operation with the United States, and we hope that that activity will grow. We will be consistent in that pursuit, unlike the Hon. Member and her Party with respect to the over-all question of membership in the NATO alliance.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

PROTECTION OF PENSION FUND INVESTMENTS

Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In the light of recent expressions of concern, what progress is being made with respect to setting up a mechanism to protect pension funds, which are really trust retirement funds, from bankruptcies and creditors' claims?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in answer to my hon. colleague, back in April we set up a consultative committee to study the Bankruptcy Act. As a matter of fact we have already announced that we will look into the matter and make a recommendation in due course.

BANKS AND BANKING

CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANK COLLAPSE—MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Hon. Douglas C. Frith (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Will he give his assurance to the House that neither the Governor of the Bank of Canada nor the Inspector General of Banks will be used by his Government as scapegoats for this billion dollar fiasco, and that the responsibility for this fiasco will rest on the shoulders of the Ministers responsible, namely, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of State for Finance?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that is one of the most interesting questions that I have heard in a long time, inasmuch as why does the Hon. Member not ask his Leader if he will give the assurance that he will not hang the Governor of the Bank of Canada before he has heard the evidence? That is what he wants to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): That is an interesting answer.

Mr. Mulroney: We will wait for the "blues", but unless I misunderstood my right hon. friend I thought I heard him say that the Governor of the Bank of Canada had misled the House of Commons and misled the Canadian people, deliberately—

Some Hon. Members: You have!

Mr. Mulroney: And that is a grave, grave accusation to make against a senior servant who has served Canada loyally, honourably, and well.

REQUEST FOR INQUIRY BY AUDITOR GENERAL

Hon. Douglas C. Frith (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that it is the responsibility of the Ministers for overseeing and recommending this billion dollar fiasco to the people of Canada. That is who is responsible for it.

The Leader of the Opposition asked the Government and the Prime Minister to allow the Auditor General to conduct an independent inquiry into the state of affairs which led to the collapse of the bank. Would the Prime Minister agree to that request?

● (1450)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this gentleman was a member of the Liberal Government, a Government that would not let the Auditor General investigate Petro-Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mulroney: They absolutely turned him down.

Some Hon. Members: Really?