

*Oral Questions*

Finance has indicated. In fact, the minister stated that there were now certain programs to help low-income families. This is particularly true of the Canada Assistance Plan for which the government has a 50 per cent cost sharing agreement. The benefits granted under these programs are determined by the provinces and not by the federal government. The Minister of Finance clearly stated that if the provinces were to take action to improve the benefits under existing assistance programs for which the Canadian government pays 50 per cent of the cost, the Canadian government would of course co-operate fully with the provinces. However, this is obviously up to the provincial governments involved. As I stated earlier, the federal government has in addition taken certain initiatives to help people through the guaranteed income supplement by increasing the benefits last summer by \$420 a year per family.

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[English]

**BANKRUPTCIES**

## ASTRA TRUST COMPANY—DEPOSITS IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY

**Mr. Gilbert Parent (Welland):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance. It has to do with the Astra Trust bankruptcy. We know that people who have investments of under \$20,000 a year are covered by the guarantees of the government. However, will the people who have U.S. currency funds on deposit be covered in like manner? If not, what will be done for those people who are Canadian citizens and have deposits of U.S. currency?

[Translation]

**Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of State, Finance):** Madam Speaker, the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation does not cover foreign currency deposits with institutions covered by Canadian deposit insurance, just as it does not cover the \$20,000 supplement for such deposits. For people who have made deposits in foreign currencies or who have deposit supplements of \$20,000, the hon. member should know that the Superintendent of Insurance is now disposing of the Astra Trust Company assets and that the revenues accruing from this disposal could eventually be used when the procedures are completed to cover, on the one hand, excess deposits over \$20,000 and, on the other hand, the type of deposits mentioned by the hon. member, namely, foreign currency deposits.

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[English]

**TRANSPORT**

## POSSIBLE USE OF "BRAS D'OR" AS COMMERCIAL FERRY OPERATION

**Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore):** Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of National

Defence. It is my understanding that a private commercial hydrofoil enterprise has operated successfully between Toronto and Niagara-on-the-Lake for the last two seasons. It has operated three hydrofoils, providing three flights a day, each having the capacity to carry 200 people. In view of these facts, would the Minister of National Defence give consideration to turning over the *Bras d'Or*, presently sitting in dry dock, to the CNR or to a commercial enterprise to be used as a commercial hydrofoil operating, say, between Shelburne, Nova Scotia and the New England states, realizing that modifications would have to be made to conform the military configurations to a design more suitable for commercial operations?

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, I am not aware of all the details which the hon. member has mentioned, but I assure him that I will look into the matter and try to give him satisfactory answers to all of his queries.

**Mr. Crouse:** Madam Speaker, would the minister inform the House whether the Toronto operators of the three hydrofoils have contracted his department about the possibility of purchasing the *Bras d'Or* for their commercial operations? If so, will he instead consider the possibility of making the ship available to Nova Scotia in order that we may assist our tourist industry by operating this ship on a commercial basis between Nova Scotia and the United States?

● (1210)

**Mr. Lamontagne:** This kind of request really does not come under my ministry, but I am interested in it. I think the question is important. If we can help in the matter the hon. member has brought forward, we will be glad to do so.

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**PRIVILEGE**

## MR. LAWRENCE—USE OF ALLEGED SECRET REPORT BY MR. COSGROVE

**Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I do so at the earliest possible time. It relates to the actions and the words of the Minister of Public Works responsible for housing (Mr. Cosgrove) during the question period today. I say actions in that the minister waved before this House some documentation which he referred to as a secret report prepared for a minister in a previous administration. He then attempted to summarize or make reference to some of the alleged contents of that report.

My question of privilege is twofold. First, under those circumstances the Chair should now order the minister to table the report because he referred to it, referred to its contents, and referred in a brief way at least to a summary of it. My second point in rising at this time is to give you notice so that the rights of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) and members of the Privy Council on this side of the House may be protected, and we can rise at a future time, relating to a far