

*Oral Questions*

● (1440)

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, had the Canadian Commercial Bank failed in March there would have been a cost roughly equivalent to what the cost is now. This has not cost taxpayers a great deal more money.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mrs. McDougall:** It was worth taking that step to save that institution. Had we chosen to take the same action then—

**Mr. Gauthier:** What's a billion!

**Mrs. McDougall:** If we had closed that bank in March, the over-all cost to the Government and to taxpayers would have been roughly equivalent to what it is now, and the economic impact in western Canada would have been enormous.

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**AGRICULTURE****HAIL DAMAGE SUFFERED BY TIMISKAMING FARMERS**

**Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. As he is very much aware, earlier this summer 38 farms in my riding were affected by severe hail damage. Has the Minister received any correspondence from his provincial counterpart dealing with any type of assistance which may be arranged?

**Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, first of all may I express my appreciation to the Hon. Member for his help and his assistance on behalf of the constituents whom he represents. In addition, he will know that we sent a federal-provincial task force to the scene and that we are dealing with our FCC clients on an individual basis. Of course the province will have to take the initiative and declare the area a disaster area before we can respond to that action.

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[Translation]

**SOCIAL SECURITY****REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION FOR ABSENCE OF FUNDS**

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. In its famous Budget of May 23, his Government was asking 3.5 million families with children to make sacrifices and to accept a 3 per cent cut in the indexation of family allowances and the child tax credit. Today, how is this Government going to explain to those millions of families in Canada that it does not have the money, that they will have to make sacrifices while at the same time his Government manages to find one billion dollars to pay rich depositors \$60,000 or more in compensation, following this bankruptcy?

[English]

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Hon. Member on the new-found responsibilities given him by the Leader of the Opposition. He asked a question regarding the family allowance provisions in the Budget. I remind him that the Budget has been passed. I believe it is the intention of the Government to bring forward legislation at a very early date regarding the subject about which he asked.

[Translation]

**REQUEST FOR DETAILS CONCERNING \$1 BILLION EARMARKED TO SAVE BANK DEPOSITS OF THE RICH**

**Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

I cannot afford to waste time on polite conversation. What Canadian families want is an answer from the Prime Minister. He showed moral cowardice when dealing with senior citizens and he is doing the same at the beginning of this session with respect to families with children.

How does the Prime Minister intend to explain to those families today who still trust him . . . He asked them to make sacrifices and indeed they are going to lose \$22 next year, 1986 . . . how is he going to explain that he found one billion to safeguard the savings of richer Canadians? How is he going to explain that to these families?

[English]

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the Hon. Member, when he asks that question, that he has not said anything about the increase in the child tax credit for those families with dependent children who receive the lowest incomes. All social agencies which have looked at it feel that that is a better approach. In fact I also remind him that the Macdonald Commission made a suggestion along similar lines. I hope he would be in favour of putting more money into the hands of those families with dependent children who are at the lower end of the scale, rather than the approach which he has taken.

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**SPACE WEAPONRY****UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE—RESEARCH CONTRACTS**

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I will turn to another potential bail-out and direct my question to the Prime Minister. He seemed to indicate that although the Canadian Government would not officially participate in star wars research, it would give financial support to private firms which wished to bid on defence research contracts in the star wars area. Would the Prime Minister clarify the following for many Canadians? Is he saying that the Canadian Government would provide the same kind of assist-