

Why did it take her government a year and a half to implement the very requests that were made by virtually everyone some 15 months ago? How long will it now take to clear the backlog under the new criteria?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the backlog will be cleared within the time frame that we originally established for it, and I have explained this to the hon. member on any number of occasions. It will be done within the budget that was originally allotted for it.

The guidelines were altered to meet the requests of Mr. Justice Jerome because it did not alter the principle that we had established of humanitarian and compassionate considerations and a credible basis review to determine refugee status as opposed to immigration status.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, as we speak today, the minister knows full well that the government is \$100 million over budget and nine months behind her proposal. I think Canadians were interested in knowing the threshold from here on.

I should like to direct my supplementary to the same minister. Given the fact that many claimants have either been denied or deported under the old criteria, will the minister guarantee that those who have been denied or deported will receive a second full hearing in Canada under the new criteria?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as I outlined this morning, those who have already left Canada, who have voluntarily departed or have been deported, will get the benefit of a full humanitarian and compassionate review in our overseas posts, which is perfectly appropriate since we have people there who are perfectly qualified to give them under the same guidelines.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday's Speech from the Throne in Saskatchewan reads in part:

Oral Questions

My government has received a commitment from the Government of Canada that financial assistance will be provided to farmers for spring seeding.

Will there be a direct cash payment of at least \$500 million in the hands of farmers by mid-April?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the House earlier, at this very moment the deputy ministers are meeting, addressing this situation, and reviewing the report of the crop review monitoring committee.

As I have indicated to the House on previous occasions, we would be trying to work out a joint federal-provincial program with the provinces involved in the design to meet the difficulties experienced in western Canada and indeed in other parts of the country.

The hon. member will just have to wait and be a little patient. I think he should take a lot of comfort in the fact that work is going on and progress is being made.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, the same Speech from the Throne also indicated:

Ottawa has also agreed to establish a mechanism to help counteract the international grain subsidy wars.

Does the minister now have a cabinet commitment of at least \$1 billion to counteract the price effect of the grain subsidy wars on Canadian farmers?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might ask the hon. member how he came up with the calculation of a \$1 billion loss as a result of the grain war. If he could give me those figures, perhaps I would take them into consideration.

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SPACE PROGRAM

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Science.

The regional plan for the space agency included a regional distribution objective for spending with approximately 10 per cent identified for Atlantic Canada. To date, only a small portion of that has gone to Atlantic Canada.