

Oral Questions

lation? Does the Minister not agree that too much in the hands of too few is dangerous?

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, of course I agree that too much in the hands of too few is dangerous. That is why the new Competition Bill is so vitally needed. I can assure the Hon. Member that the prenotification clause in the new Competition Bill will serve us well in those kinds of mergers which he describes.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**MINE LAYING OFF COAST OF NICARAGUA**

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the three Ministers who preside over external affairs, and also in the absence of the Parliamentary Secretary, I will direct my question to the Prime Minister. He will know that in recent weeks U.S.-backed contras have been laying mines off the coast of Nicaragua and that five foreign ships, including British and Dutch ships, have struck mines in the Port of Corinto, leading to an offer from France to help clear the mines. Could the Prime Minister tell the House whether the Government has investigated the possible danger to Canadian aid on board ships bound for Corinto, the results of that investigation, if there has been one, and also if the Government will join the initiative of France and offer a Canadian minesweeper to Nicaragua to help clear Nicaraguan ports?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I cannot assist the Hon. Member. I do not know whether action has been taken by the Department, but I will gladly take the question as notice.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT OFFER MINESWEEPER TO ASSIST IN CLEARANCE OPERATIONS

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Prime Minister can answer the latter part of my question as to whether the Government will offer a Canadian minesweeper, or at least consider offering one to go to Nicaragua to help clear the ports. Given the Prime Minister's opposition, stated on many occasions, to the growing militarization of the region, particularly the very much increased militarization with U.S. troops and bases in Honduras, could he assure the House that Honduras, which is Canada's country target in Central America for aid assistance, will be told that that assistance will have to be reviewed very carefully if it continues to host U.S. militarization of the region?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the last question is hypothetical in its nature. I know the Hon. Member's interest in the subject. She will know that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has been visiting

Central America. When he returns, I am sure these questions will be examined by the Government.

As to the Hon. Member's suggestion of sending a Canadian minesweeper into those waters, it surprises me, coming as it does from the Hon. Member who generally opposes the use of Canadian forces in war zones or that type of conflict. Certainly this Government has a pretty clear practice of not sending its ships, planes, or men into any conflict, or area of conflict, unless that expedition is under the United Nations' banner. I repeat, the Hon. Member seems to be coming in conflict with the long-stated policy of her own Party.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS**ALLEGED CONTRIBUTION BY TRIBAL COUNCIL TO MINISTER'S LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN**

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development I will direct my question to the Prime Minister. He knows that Indian tribal councils receive their funding from the federal Government. As a matter of fact the Minister is now after a doubling of those funds. Is the Prime Minister aware that one of these tribal councils presented a cheque for \$9,000 to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for his leadership campaign? Does he approve of taxpayer's dollars being spent to fund Ministers' leadership runs?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, no, I am not aware of that. I do not know the basis in fact of the question of the Hon. Member. I will look into it.

REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, will the Prime Minister conduct a complete investigation into this matter and, if he finds that it is true, will he remove the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development from office immediately?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member wants me to conduct a complete investigation, I would appreciate it if he could submit to me the allegations and the origin of them, and I will conduct that investigation. As to the question which followed, the Hon. Member realizes that it is hypothetical, very hypothetical.

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THE ADMINISTRATION**GOVERNMENT POLICY—RESPONSIBILITY OF MINISTERS**

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Prime Minister could tell us if it is the position of