

Oral Questions

● (1110)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD*[English]***ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE****SKY SHOPS INVESTIGATION—KNOWLEDGE OF PRIME MINISTER OF ROLE OF MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS IN GRANTING CONCESSIONS**

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Prime Minister. I should like to ask him whether he has taken any steps since yesterday to brief himself more fully on the role of any ministers or their staffs with regard to concessions to Sky Shops and whether he can inform the House if he has discovered any errors of omission or commission by ministers or their staffs in their staff relations or otherwise.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, what I made clear yesterday was that I have not been briefed by the police on this matter. I presume they would have told me if any minister had been under any suspicion, but there was no information conveyed to me by them on that. I said yesterday that I had talked to ministers and asked about their involvement. I am satisfied that neither the present Minister of the Environment nor the present Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce knew of any wrongdoing in their departments or on the part of their staff in the Sky Shops matter.

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION**ALLEGATION ADMINISTRATION TAINTED BY PARTISAN POLITICS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): I certainly thank the Prime Minister for that answer, but I should like to put a further question to him. In view of increasing evidence that porkbarrel politics has been interfering with the administration of the country's affairs at the highest staff levels in the offices of the Minister of Transport and DREE, and in view of previous denials by the Solicitor General that Liberal Party fund raising had anything to do with the investigations, which, of course, has been contradicted by the warrant obtained by the RCMP, does the Prime Minister not concede that he owes the country an explanation as to how his administration has been tainted by partisan politics, to the detriment of the management of the country's affairs?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): From one who talks of partisan politics that seems to me to be a fine statement of partisan politics in which there are unsubstantiated allegations. If the hon. member has any allegations, I will make sure the police look into them, and I will look into them myself. I told the House—and I expect the hon. member to take my word—that I discussed this matter with both ministers and that they knew of no unethical, illegal or improper activities within their offices regarding the Sky Shops affair.

[Mr. Speaker:]

ROLE OF MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT IN APPOINTMENT OF CARMEL CARRIÈRE TO IMMIGRATION APPEAL BOARD

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, naturally I respect the word of the Prime Minister on this matter. I should like to ask a final supplementary of the Minister of the Environment on the question of the appointment of Carmel Carrière to the Immigration Appeal Board. Could the minister indicate whether he played any role at the relevant time with respect to this appointment and whether the appointment will be renewed, or will it be as it was in the case of the Hamilton Harbour Commission? Will there be changes made?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. With respect, I have the greatest difficulty understanding how that relates to the minister's responsibility for the environment. Could the hon. member make that clear?

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I think it has a relationship in the sense that this lady was the executive assistant to the minister at some relevant times here and is now on the Immigration Appeal Board, so I am wondering about the circumstances.

Mr. Speaker: At some relevant times is the point which might be clarified by the hon. member. I thought we ought to be clear on what relevant time, what ministry and what minister. We have to understand how the question relates to the minister's current responsibilities because it is to the current minister that the question is put. I do not think we have to use the whole question period to try to sort this out, but if the hon. member has a question for the appropriate minister at the time the decision to make the appointment was made, perhaps the hon. member would like to reflect on how he might be more accurate.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**SKY SHOPS INVESTIGATION—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION BY PRIME MINISTER OF ROLE OF MINISTERS OR OFFICIALS IN GRANTING CONCESSIONS**

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, with all deference I think the Prime Minister begs the question here, and having regard to our experiences in the judges' affair in which some time elapsed before he was able to apprise himself and make himself fully aware of the circumstances with respect to that incident, I now ask the Prime Minister whether he will undertake at this time to make the fullest and most thorough investigation on the basis of ministerial responsibility and report before Easter with respect to his knowledge or his investigation of whether the ministers or staff members of the ministers' offices were free from any impropriety whatsoever, so that we can be satisfied before we break for Easter.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in the preamble to the question the hon. member talked about a lapse of time. I remind him that as soon as the Minister of Justice heard from the judges of any possible impropriety, he launched an investigation by the judges themselves into the matter.