

cabinet has made a decision in principle that immigration must be cut or restrained?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, in my view, the Leader of the Opposition should not attempt to ascertain what is going on in cabinet any more than his colleague from Leeds should be expected to challenge the Prime Minister on employees on the staff of cabinet.

● (1420)

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate the help and advice of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Trudeau: You need it.

Mr. Stanfield: In that case, sir, I appreciate it even more.

Mr. Hees: There sits paternalistic Pierre, always willing to help.

Mr. Stanfield: Despite the lecture from the right hon. gentleman, which I accept in good part, it is appropriate for a member of the House to ask the government whether a decision has been made by the government on an important matter of principle. Now that the Prime Minister has given me the lecture, for which I express appreciation, will he answer the question? Will he tell us whether a decision has been taken on the principle of restricting or cutting immigration to Canada?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, obviously, there is disagreement here about practices in cabinet. I do not know what the hon. gentleman's practice was when he was leader of a provincial government.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): He did better than this government has done.

Mr. Trudeau: I assure the hon. member that if the government makes decisions which concern the public, they will be made public in the usual way and discussed with the provinces. As for other discussions or decisions which will be made in cabinet, they will remain subject to cabinet secrecy.

Mr. Baldwin: But you never decide anything.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

EFFECT OF REGULATION ON RE-UNIFICATION OF FAMILIES ON POSSIBLE TREATY ON EUROPEAN CO-OPERATION AND SECURITY

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Does the new immigration policy mean that Canada has changed its position on the re-unification of families being a condition precedent to a possible treaty on European co-operation and security?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, without commenting on

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the immigration aspect of the question, I assure my hon. friend that the objectives being pursued by Canada with respect to the re-unification of families at the European conference are still valid and relevant.

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IMMIGRATION

ALLEGED ADOPTION OF RESTRICTIVE POLICY—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE OF NO DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF RACE OR GEOGRAPHY

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. In the light of various reports that a proposal is being put forward to pass restrictive regulations affecting particularly immigration from parts of Europe such as Italy and Portugal, and from the Caribbean, South America and Asia, will the Prime Minister assure the House now that no changes in the regulations are contemplated which will revert to the old system of discrimination on the basis of geography or race.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I gave that undertaking in my answer to the first question asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

ALLEGATION GOVERNMENT LEGISLATING BY REGULATION—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE PRACTICE WILL CEASE UNTIL GREEN PAPER PUBLISHED

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister on the same matter. It seems to me that this is the second time the government wishes to legislate by way of regulation on an important issue.

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Alexander: What's the problem?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Ask the question.

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the promised green paper, the government is regulating by way of legislation. Many people, including members on this side of the House, take a dim view of that. Will the Prime Minister assure us that this sort of practice will cease until the views of the Canadian people have been known through the green paper. Will the government avail itself of that course, instead of doing things by this devious method?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the opposition is making in advance speeches it may want to make if the government ever makes a statement on motions on the subject.

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is getting "snarky". I have the greatest respect for him. Will he give that assurance? Surely, a matter of such importance should not be legislated by way of regulation. I am asking the Prime Minister to give this House and the country some assurance that this practice will cease forthwith.