

Inquiries of the Ministry

With regard to the federal task force entrusted with a review of Canadian policy as a whole, would the Prime Minister tell us whether the government intends to publish a White Paper on the results of such a review to be made available to all members of this house or whether he will make a summary statement?

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I realize that I directed my question to the wrong person. I shall ask the same question of the minister who wishes to answer it, that is the Minister of National Defence. Is it the intention to publish a White Paper or to make a statement in the house with regard to the findings of the federal task force that made a review of the whole NATO question?

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the question should be directed to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege.

I am refused an answer to my question, and yet it is a very simple one.

I therefore ask the Prime Minister, to whom, according to the Minister of National Defence, my question should be directed, if the government intends to make a statement or to publish a White Paper in connection with the findings of the federal task force—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member is asking the same question for the third time, after raising the question of privilege. I must remind him that the rules are very clear in this connection and that the minister's refusal to reply to an inquiry cannot become a question of privilege.

[English]

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I have two brief questions for the minister. In his discussions in Europe was the question of the maritime role in connection with NATO discussed and, if so, what was the conclusion? Second, will the minister undertake to give some indication to the house before we recess for the summer of what the effect of the defence review will be on maritime command?

[Mr. Fortin.]

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): Yes, Mr. Speaker, this matter was raised. I was asked the question whether we would co-operate with SA-CLANT, to which I answered yes, of course. In respect of the second part of the question, I am a little embarrassed because I did indicate today that I have found that the procedures are more involved than I anticipated. I will take every opportunity to make a progress report but it is very hard for me to indicate exactly when I can. I understand the concern of my hon. friend and of the members of the forces themselves. As soon as we can we will spell out and unfold the plan that has been agreed to.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps before I permit the hon. member to ask a supplementary question I should bring to the attention of hon. members that we have spent a good portion of the question period on this very important matter. It may be the wish of hon. members that the Chair allow hon. members to ask questions on other subjects and that additional supplementaries be continued later if there is time, or tomorrow. For the moment the Chair recognizes the hon. member for Peace River.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister whether he advised his ministerial colleagues in Brussels that when the defection of Canada inevitably precipitates other reductions by other countries the Canadian government will regard with equanimity the very substantial increase in the West German military establishment and increased reliance on nuclear power which will result from these facts?

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry but I must say that the question of my hon. friend is based on a complete misconception of what I proposed to my colleagues in NATO.

CANADIAN CONFEDERATION

CONSTITUTIONAL LEGALITY OF PROPOSAL BY QUEBEC TO HOLD REFERENDUM

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct this question to the Prime Minister. In view of press announcements that the premier of Quebec is proposing to introduce legislation which will permit him to take a referendum of the people of Quebec with regard to staying in confederation, is the government looking into this matter to see whether or not such legislation would be *intra vires* and whether any