

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: I did not say that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the Prime Minister tell the house what role in continental defence it is intended that Canadian troops withdrawn from Europe will take over?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, we have already declared that we will have a white paper on our foreign policy. When this white paper is ready we will lay it before the house. We feel of necessity that defence policy must flow from foreign policy, and not the contrary. That is why we want to have the white paper on our foreign policy debated by this house and submitted to the country before we make any final commitments with regard to any military or defence policy and before spelling out the exact implications of that foreign policy.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. How does the Prime Minister expect us to debate or discuss this policy if he is not prepared to give us some indication as to the role it is intended Canadian troops will play in continental defence after they are brought home?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question as asked was argumentative.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a related or supplementary question. I ask the Prime Minister to clarify to the house what appears to be, but may not be, a contradiction between his statement of April 3 and a statement he made in his address in Calgary last Saturday night. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, may I remind the right hon. gentleman of his statement of April 3? He said that the reduction of Canadian forces and the nature of that reduction would be discussed with our allies at the NATO defence meeting in May. In his speech in Calgary the right hon. gentleman stated, as he did today, that foreign policy should precede defence policy and that therefore no decision as to a reduction will be made until the white paper on foreign policy has been represented and debated in parliament.

In view of these apparently contradictory statements may I ask the right hon. gentleman whether it is the intention of the government to present a white paper on foreign and

defence policy or on the foreign policy alone prior to May, or prior to the meeting of the defence ministers of NATO in May?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, what I said in Calgary and what I will repeat to this house is that we feel that in the past several years there has been a tendency for our foreign policy to be swallowed by our defence policy which, in turn, was swallowed by our NATO policy. We are trying to put this pyramid on its base and inform the country first of our foreign policy. This is our first step. After this foreign policy has been established within the new direction we are giving it, we will decide what defence policy ought to flow from that. Having decided what our defence policy will be in future years, we will decide what participation NATO will have in that defence policy. This is our way of proceeding.

There have been certain exaggerated efforts relating to the April meeting and the proposed meeting for May which have had the effect of trying to commit us in a final way to a NATO policy before our foreign policy review has been completed in a white paper and submitted to this house. We are resisting this development and making sure we are not once again committed to a NATO policy before our over-all foreign policy has been established.

Mr. Lewis: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. That is precisely what I was trying to discover from the right hon. gentleman. I happen to agree with the statement he made in Calgary, and repeated in this house, that foreign policy ought to precede defence policy. Does that mean that the statement of April 3 to the effect that the reduction of Canadian forces will be discussed with and that a plan will be presented to the defence ministers of NATO in May with regard to reduction of forces is not valid, and that that will not happen?

Mr. Trudeau: No, Mr. Speaker. There are various ways in which we can proceed on the matter. We can submit to our friends in NATO different sets of proposals with regard to the reduction of forces and listen to their reactions to those proposals. We can use this input, if one may call it that, in the final stage of our defence and foreign policy. The final decision as to what will happen after January of next year will only be made when the ministers meet in August. That will give us another few months to review this subject. I hope by then that our foreign policy in the