

that particular minister has been away a good deal in the last two or three months; and although there is nothing he would like better than to spend the month of January amidst the balmy breezes of Colombo, I am not quite certain at this time who will be the representative of the government. I may not be allowed to go.

The conference in question, as I understand it, will deal with external affairs of general interest to the Commonwealth and will not confine its activities to Pacific or Far Eastern questions. Nevertheless, a Canadian representative at this meeting will be willing and anxious to participate in that part of the agenda because we appreciate the importance of Pacific questions, especially at this time.

The hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) said that the puzzled and confusing Chinese picture should be unveiled. It may be that we shall be in a slightly better position to unveil that picture after the conversations that we shall be having in Colombo. I can assure him, Mr. Speaker, although I do not think the assurance is necessary, that it is a puzzled and confusing picture, and it is difficult indeed to unveil it at the present moment so that any recognizable features appear. In my statement yesterday I attempted to underline some of the principles that governed our policy in regard to that part of the world, and I do not know that I can go much further at this time than I went yesterday. I should like to mention one thing, though, because reference was made to it in debate. I can assure the house that no pressure of any kind from any quarter has been brought to bear on the Canadian government to recognize or not to recognize the communist government of China.

Reference has been made to the possibility of a Pacific pact to parallel the Atlantic pact, and I was asked if I could express the policy of the government in this respect. I can only say, as I believe has been said already, that it is not possible to draw an exact parallel between the two situations. The countries of the north Atlantic were ready for a security pact. All the countries concerned, with the possible exception of one--and reference has been made to that this afternoon--were all anxious to join such a pact and there was no difference of opinion in regard to the principles of such a pact. But that is certainly not the situation in the Pacific at the present time. Those countries which are at least as concerned as we are in Pacific matters--and I am thinking of Australia, India and the United States--have all stated, through their responsible representatives, that it would be premature at this time to attempt to negotiate a Pacific pact. That being the case, I think we would be making a mistake if we tried to press ahead with the matter at this moment.

Questions were also asked as to our policy in regard to Japanese political developments and trade with China. With regard to the former, as I said yesterday, I think that the governments concerned should press ahead with the Japanese peace pact and that all of us, individually and collectively, should do all that we can to strengthen the building up in Japan of a democratic government that will be a centre of peace and stability in that area. But there are times when I feel--and I have attempted to express this opinion before--that we should be careful to recall that it was not so long ago when the menace from Japan seemed almost as terrible as the menace from other quarters in the Far East seems at the present time. And we should not lose sight of what might be an ultimate danger because of the immediate danger that is ahead of us. Therefore when we are encouraging the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Japan let us make sure that we are helping to build up a democratic peace-loving Japan.

As far as trade with China is concerned, Mr. Speaker, there is no argument on that score. Nothing can be more important to Canada than building up trade with the far east, including China; but one essential element in the development of trade with the areas over which the writ of the communist government now runs is to establish some kind of contact with that government. So naturally the promotion of trade is part of the problem of our relationship with the communist government in China, and the two cannot be separated.