

Supply—External Affairs

western way of life which is being presented in communist countries and by communist agents in the less developed areas. It will take perhaps a little time to do this, Mr. Chairman, and a lot of conferring with other governments.

But there is one thing Canada can do alone. I propose that the government call, for the year 1962 or 1963, a conference on understanding. Each member of the United Nations should be asked to nominate 50 student delegates to this conference. I suggest that it be held at one of the great Canadian universities and that the Canadian conference of universities be asked to look after the administrative arrangements. I calculate the cost of such a conference as \$15 million, which is less than 1 per cent of what this country is now spending yearly on national defence.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I know there will be cynics and others throughout this country who will say that this will be nothing but an interesting gathering of students and academics who may enrich their lives to some extent by coming to this country and attending seminars, having conversations and touring about. However, I say it is terribly important that at the earliest opportunity we bring together as many students as possible, especially from those areas of the world in which there are limited educational opportunities, to meet with political and academic leaders in this country. With proper planning this conference could make a significant contribution to understanding. I believe that a wide range of subjects could be discussed. I do not believe it would be difficult to attract a voluntary corps of Canadian university professors and others, and as much would be gained by informal meetings with these people and students from abroad as from the formal sessions. This country has the resources to undertake such a project, and I hope it will attract the imagination and interest of other members in this parliament and the support of the government.

The next proposal I should like to make, Mr. Chairman, the Secretary of State for External Affairs will be pleased to hear, requires no money at all from the government. It is a request I should like to make of the businessmen of this country. Hon. members will have read recently in the newspapers about the landing in India, Ceylon and Sarawak of the first contingent of Canadian overseas volunteers, known in Quebec as "Volontaires Canadiens Outre-Mer". Under sponsorship of this private association, 15 young Canadians representing most parts of Canada have undertaken a year's voluntary service in these areas. They receive a small subsistence allowance from the host government.

[Mr. Stinson.]

Where there is a Canadian representative, a contingency fund is administered to meet unusual conditions and, on instructions from the government, the Canadian high commissioners are keeping a watchful eye on the volunteers. I think Canadians can be proud of the fact that these young people are now in the field and have taken up their duties before any members of the Kennedy peace corps have left the United States.

I would not want hon. members to think, however, that the Canadian overseas volunteers have been in competition with the peace corps. The Canadian overseas volunteers are not in competition with anybody. They are not out there seeking honour and glory. Their purpose is to serve in a humble way in industry, agriculture, public administration, commerce or medicine under the direction of the host government, and to promote international understanding and brotherhood by informing themselves and other Canadians of the history, culture, traditions, political and economic life of the people among whom they are working. Two weeks ago, Mr. Chairman, I stood on a dock in London and watched these 15 young Canadian students standing beside the rail of a ship leaving for their areas of voluntary service. It was a moving experience and I am sure that if businessmen who may read this speech can imagine that experience, they will rally to the cause and send in their contributions.

These people, leaving aside opportunities to enhance their financial position and going out into an environment quite alien to that to which they are accustomed and working under conditions which are strange and extraordinary, were prepared to do one year at least of sacrificial service. If we, sitting back here in the relatively easy conditions of the home front, fail to give these young men and women and their successors a reasonable amount of financial support, I say that we have missed a great opportunity to serve the world through them and to serve our own country. Canadian overseas volunteers originated with a suggestion made by Dr. Donald K. Faris, a Canadian of great experience in Asia and now working with UNICEF in India. The chief academic advisers have been Dr. Nathan Keyfitz who is a former director of the Colombo plan bureau and Professor Yves Martin of Laval University. As I have said, a first year's pilot program is now well under way. Its success will depend on the work of the volunteers themselves, but they would not have got out there had it not been for the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Keith Spicer, whose rare qualities have been brought to bear on