

Supply—External Affairs

frequently tells me not to rely upon these reports but I think they are a lot better than the information we get from the government. We read in the newspapers about Australia either intending to impose or perhaps already having imposed conscription. Why? Is it because of the threat of Indonesia? The imposition of conscription in a normal period of peace is a very serious matter for any country and Canada is fully aware of the implications of such an action.

What is the situation in Malaysia in respect of Indonesia, and what part are other members of the commonwealth playing with regard to that troubled area? Is this what is bothering Australia? If it is, we should know, and if Australia is in danger surely we should be the first to say, "Count on us to assist", because we have fought with them in other wars.

I draw to the attention of the minister some of the really serious matters which I hope he will deal with frankly and not with those peripatetic platitudes to which he subjects us. They arouse a bit of humour, but foreign affairs are a very serious matter. The whole country can be affected by actions which take place elsewhere in the world and we should be kept informed, because when trouble arises we have to call on the Canadian people to make a response, even call on the Canadian militia, which is now being disregarded by the Minister of National Defence, to make a response.

That is all I want to say at this stage with regard to these important matters. I hope the minister, if and when he answers us, will treat the subject with the seriousness it deserves and make clear to the Canadian people what Canada's policy is with regard to the matters I have touched upon.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, I think it is understood that we might perhaps take a few moments extra to deal with some of the matters raised. I thank my hon. friend who I think was perhaps justifiably vigorous in his denunciation of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and I accept it in the very kindly spirit which I know motivated his remarks. He mentioned the situation in Malaysia. It is a serious problem. Malaysia is a commonwealth country. Canada was recently visited by the Tunku, the prime minister of that country. We discussed with him desirable methods of assisting his country in meeting the continuous guerrilla attacks that have been made against Malaysia by Indonesia.

It is not the intention of the government of Canada to send troops for purposes of com-

[Mr. Churchill.]

bat to any part of Asia, except pursuant to obligations under the charter of the United Nations. This policy has been enunciated by the Prime Minister and by me. It was examined in the external affairs committee when all of these estimates were considered. There has been a military mission in Malaysia examining with the government of that country and its military authorities, in conjunction with the forces of Australia, Britain, New Zealand and other countries, what kind of assistance we might be called upon to provide. This is a matter of great concern to us and also of particular concern, of course, to Australia as it is to New Zealand, because of the geographical relationship of those countries to the federation.

It will be recalled that one of the reasons why Australia could not participate in the United Nations peace force in Cyprus was its preoccupations in Asia. My hon. friend may be assured that this matter is being followed through the closest consultation not only with the commonwealth but with other countries as well.

I followed with interest the statement made by the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke and I agree with him that the interests of Canada in the Pacific are growing, and that our interests in that area cannot be allowed to go unregarded. We are a Pacific as well as an Atlantic power. Our interests with the Orient are increasing. We have with Japan the third largest volume of trade that we have with any country in the world. We exchange goods with that country to an amount approaching \$500 million. There are many communities of interest between the foreign policies of Japan and Canada. At the third ministerial meeting last September my colleagues and I took advantage of the opportunity to review important economic, trade and foreign policy matters.

Our interests with the Orient, of course, are not confined to Japan but involve commonwealth and other countries in Asia. I fully agree with the hon. member that this is an area to which Canada inescapably in its own interests must pay increasing attention. I thought the hon. gentleman made a thoughtful speech.

There were other problems referred to. My hon. friend referred to our relations with Latin America. The hon. member for Peace River quite properly noted that an area of the world that will have a population at the end of this century of 600 million people is an area that we cannot ignore, particularly when we think of the community of cultural,