

*Supply—External Affairs*

• (4:30 p.m.)

Our nation is living proof that people do not have to accept a police state in order to have enough to eat. It is living proof that personal freedom and private initiative can deliver the goods while the best laid five-year plans of other nations end in failure. Across the world the people of the underdeveloped nations, the former colonies, can see in our nation how development can take place under freedom. We in Canada have a responsibility to make known to these people on the practical level the secrets of our success. It is up to us to demonstrate with action, not just with words, that our way of life, our dedication to service, which have been the means of providing us with so much, will also do likewise for them.

What we teach and demonstrate abroad, Mr. Chairman, we must substantiate at home. I do not think it is too ideal an objective when I say I believe Canada can lead the world in recovering a sense of unity among peoples. However, such unity will only be recovered by the rediscovery of conscience and an awareness of our own responsibility to each other. Canadians as a people must come to realize the changing character of the world and must help their country to play a leading role in resolving some of the great questions facing the future of man. Only if the individual citizen is concerned and involved with the problems of the world will his nation do anything of significance. Therefore every citizen has an obligation to inform himself about the world and, in one way or another, become involved in it. I hope that the Secretary of State for External Affairs, despite his activities in his party's leadership contest, will not cease to give attention to this very important aspect of not only developing a stronger aid program but of making Canadians themselves aware of their responsibilities in this field.

I should like to remind the members of this committee of a statement made by our own director of external aid not too long ago. Just before the close of centennial year he said:

As we near the beginning of our second century as a nation, we are struggling to find a sense of purpose to unite us. It is not in economic terms that we justify our nationhood... I believe that, by focusing the interest of Canadians in every walk of life and mobilizing the resources they represent to expand Canada's participation in the processes of international development, a new dynamic dimension can be brought into play in Canadian life.

I support that statement, Mr. Chairman. I think it is a very succinct definition of our

[Mr. Thompson.]

responsibility at this time. Therefore I repeat that I appreciated the words of the Leader of the Official Opposition this afternoon as he expressed himself on this important topic.

I had not intended to deal at length with foreign policy but there are a couple of matters I should like to put before the minister in connection with Africa. You will forgive me, Mr. Chairman, for speaking about Africa but Africa claims the biggest part of my adult life. I am concerned about some of the things happening there and I do not believe that the people of Canada or the members of this house are fully aware of them.

We talk about the suffering in Viet Nam and the loss of life as the result of the terrible war being carried on there. But little do we realize that probably twice as many people during the last year alone lost their lives in the little secessionist country of Biafra. The other day we heard the very able testimony given by Dr. Johnson of the Presbyterian church when he outlined his experiences both in Biafra and Nigeria, having met officials in both areas. No news is given to the outside world about what is happening there but I would say that the horror and suffering taking place there at the present time are far worse than in Viet Nam. That does not mean that I condone the horror and suffering in Viet Nam. I just want to emphasize that in Nigeria we had a situation that we all felt was ideal. We felt it was the one place in colonial Africa where we could expect democracy to take firm root. However, the country has now been torn in half as the result of several military coups and a wholesale massacre by evil people.

Last year, several million people fled Nigeria and returned to their native land in eastern Nigeria. However, they have now found themselves locked in terrible slaughter without even the benefit of any kind of medical services, sanitation or help from the outside world. Surely something can be done about this situation. It is not good enough to dismiss it as an internal matter in Nigeria. It is not good enough to say that the United Nations has no responsibility in this situation. Are we going to see genocide on a scale not seen since world war II committed before the eyes of the world, with nobody saying or doing anything about it?

We are rightly proud of our own Arnold Smith who is secretary general of the Commonwealth Association. He is endeavouring to do something in this regard. However, it seems to me that Canada ought to be moving directly into this situation. We should use the