

Everyone has talked about resolutions 338 and 242. The press states that Canada supports 242. When an explanation is given, then we get in trouble. If you just mention the resolution number, you are never in trouble.

Was he asked clearly, "Do you support resolution 242, withdrawal from occupied territories, withdrawal from Golan Heights, withdrawal from South Lebanon, recognition of the Palestinian people?" Did he accept that the statute of Jerusalem will some day be the subject of discussion? Has he been asked these questions? Has he been answering, "Yes, I do accept Canadian official policies that have been well entrenched under successive Canadian governments"?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, obviously I cannot indicate today what conversations may have taken place with Ambassador Berger. I think he would know that certainly the new ambassador should be strongly in support of the Canadian position. It is well known that he has been a strong supporter of the peace process in the Middle East. I do not know the details of any conversations, nor do I know whether I will be able to discover them for my honourable friend, but I will certainly pass on his question to the proper individuals.

Senator Prud'homme: Honourable senators, I have to differ on that point. He has never been a supporter of the peace process. The peace process means recognition of the Palestinian people and their spokesperson. Has he been asked to stay away from the "Butcher of Lebanon," whom he welcomed warmly in Montreal, in the company of a member of the House of Commons who is now a senator, after the invasion of Lebanon? She however is not involved, so I will not mention her name. I did not mind such actions in the past, but now he represents me and the French Canadian people, who have always been sympathetic to the cause of the Palestinian people.

• (1400)

As Canada's ambassador to Israel, he will be under great scrutiny. I have already made calls to the Middle East to make sure that he is welcome there, and that he is shown the true situation. I am doing my duty as a Canadian. I want him to succeed in his new appointment, but he has a long way to go. I want to make sure, as he did, and that is why I am asking that you refer these questions to the appropriate people. That is very important.

Canada has the greatest of reputations in the Middle East. I have just returned from Lebanon and Kuwait. Canada is so highly perceived that the attitude of our ambassador could affect our reputation.

Honourable senators, I will make a motion on the issue of Middle East policy before the departure of this Parliament, but I ask you again, has Mr. Berger been asked these questions? Second, has he been asked to apologize, either privately or publicly — which, to me, would be more appropriate — to me and to the mayor of Bethlehem, one of the most reasonable persons to ever appear here before a committee of the Senate? Honourable senators will have read of the incident in the newspaper where, under the heat of discussion, he is supposed to

have said to the mayor that he was "as full of shit" — and I mention the word — as I was. That was to the Christian mayor of Bethlehem, who is the most honourable person to appear before a Senate committee. I hope Mr. Berger was given that kind of instruction, in order to better serve Canada's interests.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Senator Prud'homme has mentioned the regard with which Canada is held for its policies within the Middle East. The new ambassador to Israel will, of course, be carrying Canada's policies in the Middle East strongly with him when he begins his new assignment. There is no question about that, Senator Prud'homme. I will pass on your comments, but let there be no doubt that the new ambassador to Israel will carry the Canadian position to the Middle East with vigour.

AGRICULTURE

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD—TIMING OF EXAMINATION BY EXPERTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Leonard J. Gustafson: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In view of the dramatic changes in agriculture, and also of the recommendations made by the trade committee which looked into trade between the U.S. and Canada, the Minister of Agriculture has promised that a committee of experts would look into the work of the Canadian Wheat Board. Does the minister have any indication of timing on this matter? Things are changing quickly in agriculture these days, and the government must move quickly to accommodate those changes.

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I appreciate the comments of my honourable friend. I can tell him that the Minister of Agriculture has this item very high on his agenda. He is moving as swiftly as he can. I cannot give the honourable senator an exact time-frame, but it will be very soon.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION BILL (FEDERAL AGENCIES)

THIRD READING

Hon. B. Alasdair Graham moved the third reading of Bill C-65, to reorganize and dissolve certain federal agencies.

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Honourable senators, with respect to Bill C-65, the Government Organization Bill (Federal Agencies), there is a provision in this bill to remove the position of assistant director of the Canada Council. Clauses of the bill refer to salaries and allowances paid to members of the council, including the president, vice-president and the nine other members. Their numbers have been reduced from what they were previously. I believe there were 19 members of the Canada Council. The bill also deals with the remuneration and allowances to be paid to the director of the council.