

legislation be adopted in order to prevent such developments, especially at a time when diplomatic personnel and missions are being used, if not abused, to promote particular political objectives—and Heaven knows this is true.

Honourable senators, I think that we should congratulate the government for introducing legislation that could be before its time. Quite often, legislation comes after a considerable time-lag to remedy a situation. I believe that this—and I hope it will never happen—would anticipate the kind of situation which our Australian friends went through some months ago.

I think honourable senators will agree that today is an appropriate day for us to be seized of this type of legislation. As we walked into the chamber, we see, on the courtesy flagstaff, a Union Jack. This reminded us of what a very important day this is—the anniversary of the day the Statute of Westminster was proclaimed. My stern mentor, Professor Lower, wrote that if Canada had an independence day, it would be December 11—a day in 1931 on which we could clearly proclaim for the world to hear and agree that we and our fellow members of the Commonwealth were autonomous states, in no way subordinate one to another. R. B. Bennett, often considered an imperialist and a colonial-minded man, said that the old political empire has disappeared. It was a great day.

We know, of course, that Canada obtained its independence a good while before that. Canada became an independent state in 1917 when Sir Robert Borden led us into the League of Nations and to participation in the Treaty of Versailles. However, as is the custom in the British parliamentary system, it sometimes takes a while for the official statutory declaration to catch up with the actual situation. The gap between 1917 and 1931 I think is indicative of that custom.

Another reason, honourable senators, why I feel it is suitable, fitting and proper that we give our attention to amendment of this important act, which deals with diplomatic privileges and immunities, is the terrible situation which has for so long continued in Iran. At the meeting of the United Nations Security Council last week, in the preamble to the resolution which was adopted unanimously, they invoked the reaffirmation of the Vienna convention. I think it is important that we focus on this tremendously important statutory convention on relationship between states, and keep it in focus. I believe the government has done well in that regard. I also think the President of the United States has done extremely well. This is not the time to enter into a dialogue on whether the shah is worse than the ayatollah.

The Vienna convention is a great *habeas corpus* which governs nations. It is the vehicle upon which is carried the whole comity between and among nations. I believe it is extremely important that in viewing this terrible crisis in Iran that we keep in mind the fundamental rule that states cannot break the Vienna convention. They cannot forswear their commitment to deal properly with the representatives of other countries. One hundred and twenty-nine countries have subscribed to the Vienna convention, and it is illegal, improper, and I might also say indecent, to mete out to the mission

people in Tehran the kind of treatment they received. It is not a matter of custom or tradition, as the press sometimes say; it is much more than that. It is international law and for that reason I commend this amendment to you.

The bill is a piece of legislation which is truly worthwhile. Anything we do to sustain our belief in the Vienna convention is a further hallmark of our country's status as a respected, strong, honourable member of the diplomatic international community.

Senator Thompson: Honourable senators, I congratulate Senator Macquarrie on his lucid and comprehensive explanation of the bill. Indeed, I commend him on his description of the Vienna convention as the *habeas corpus* which governs nations, and I thank him for reaching out also to indicate the importance of the Vienna convention and the role of Canada as an independent nation.

I should like to ask the honourable senator a question before I move the adjournment of the debate. The question stems from a lack of knowledge, but my understanding is that an ambassador has to bring his credentials to the Governor General and seek his approval before an embassy is accredited. Is that the situation or not?

Senator Macquarrie: Honourable senators, in reply to my colleague, the problem is not with those embassies which are accredited, but with those self-styled "embassies". They are bogus in that they purport to be embassies.

The Croatians, I presume, purchased a building in Canberra and said that it was the Croatian embassy, and endeavoured to suggest that they were, in fact, a presence representing a part of Yugoslavia. They had no credentials and they had no legal status, but the Australian government had great difficulty in preventing them from purporting and seeming to be a diplomatic entity. I hope this explanation is helpful.

On motion of Senator Thompson, debate adjourned.

● (1520)

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 2, 1979-80

SECOND READING—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Senator Doody moved the second reading of Bill C-29, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending March 31, 1980.

He said: Honourable senators, the bill before us, which I have the honour of sponsoring in the Senate, deals with supplementary estimates (B) for 1979-80. I do this with a great deal of hesitation today. I moved a bill a few days ago without realizing how new and raw I was in the Senate. I guess I listened to my friend Senator Macquarrie say how humble he was as a junior member of this house, how he feared he might go astray, and how he had greatness thrust upon him. I suppose I should think of some other old saw, such as "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," because I went through this on the second day I was here. I feel, therefore, that I should thank honourable senators for being so patient and