

mechanism must be established to have the views of all native people in the Mackenzie Valley represented at the negotiating table, as the Indians and Métis live together in the same communities, share the same resources, and are regarded by everyone as one people.

I might just make two additional brief comments, Mr. Speaker. Given the present situation, there is a need for both groups to reach agreement on a process for joint negotiations. This could mean, for example, an umbrella structure, or alternatively, both groups could come to the same table as separate entities. The Mackenzie Valley chiefs have stated that they intend to deal with this matter at a leadership meeting later this month. In the meantime, a decision on first quarter funding will be made within the next few days.

Given the need for a single settlement, further claims research and negotiations funding is entirely dependent on both organizations coming together. Hopefully, an understanding between the organizations can be reached after the Dene leadership meeting in June so that the negotiations can proceed and the necessary supportive funding be continued.

#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADORS TO AND BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES

**Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough):** Mr. Speaker, on February 22 I asked the minister about the prospects of the establishment of embassies in Amman and Damascus. While congratulating him on his announcement of the opening of a Canadian embassy in Kuwait, I questioned him as to when the Kuwaiti government would be sending an ambassador solely accredited to this country.

As my learned and most respected friend the parliamentary secretary knows, I have urged repeatedly the improvement of contacts between Canada and the peoples of the Arab world. Commercial, social, cultural and diplomatic ties could be strengthened with a group of nations with which there are no reasons for anything but cordial relations with Canada. The economies of many of the countries of the Arab Middle East are developing in such a way as to offer major opportunities for Canadian investment and technical co-operation. It is my experience from frequent visits to these countries that Canada often lags behind other more alert and aggressive trading countries. Considering the slack state of our own economy I think it would be shocking neglect to miss opportunities in the outside world.

While much can be done and must be done by the private sector, the government can assist in strengthening government-to-government contacts, in obtaining information, and by using agencies such as the Canadian Export Development Corporation in reference to those Arab countries not wealthy through an abundance of petro-dollars. Not all Arab countries are facing grave problems of what to do with their money! Some need assistance in infrastructure and especially technical aid.

I fear we have not taken advantage of an opportunity offered by the Kuwaiti fund for development whose director I met here in Ottawa a few years ago. It was his suggestion that,

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through a marriage of the fund's finances and CIDA's technical know-how, much could be done. I believe it was a most useful suggestion and I would have been happier had the Canadian response been more fulsome and interested.

If I recall aright, when I came to the House of Commons in 1957 we had embassies in the Middle East only in Lebanon, Israel and Egypt. I many times called for exchange of diplomatic missions with other areas of the Arab world, notably Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates. Over the years this has been done and one can see clearly that improved trade and investment contacts have followed. Canadian businessmen are involved in major projects in Saudi Arabia. One of these is the construction of what will be one of the most splendid and costliest universities in the world. I am happy that we have missions in those beautiful Magreb countries, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

But there are two countries whose importance in the Middle East, and more specifically in Middle East tensions, cannot be overestimated. These are Syria and Jordan. They are confrontation states vitally concerned with the future of the Palestinians whose status, as is now almost universally agreed, is the core of the Middle East problem.

As a founding member of the United Nations which created Israel, as a member of the Security Council and as the provider of peacekeeping forces in the area, Canada must and should be vitally interested in the establishment of a just and durable peace in the area. I do not think we can do our job or play our part without close contact with Jordan and Syria. We need a presence, a listening post, a place for regular dialogue with those pivotal countries. For the immediate and urgent requirement of the current troubles and tension we should be there. Beyond that exist many reasons for strengthening our ties with those two countries who are working out their destiny under different forms of government but to whom peace today and prosperity today and tomorrow are vital.

● (2212)

**Mr. Maurice Dupras (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend my hon. colleague and friend, the distinguished member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), for his great interest in the Arab countries, more particularly Jordan and Kuwait. Since we are going to establish a new embassy in Kuwait it goes without saying that we would be delighted if Kuwait would create a mission in Ottawa. Nevertheless, nothing at present indicates that Kuwait intends to open a mission in Ottawa in the immediate future.

[*Translation*]

Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, no state has unlimited funds for the purposes of diplomatic representation. Still I am sure that the presence of the resident mission of Canada in Kuwait would improve our bilateral relations in our best respective interests and it is not unreasonable to hope that as a result of closer relations, the government of Kuwait will one day open an embassy in Canada.