

The report also concurs in Canadian positions, as we understand them, taken by the past government and, it would seem from statements made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, taken by the present government to be carried forward. The report agrees with those positions taken by Canada on questions such as the sovereignty of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza, the Golan Heights, and the settlement policy, the PLO and the re-establishment of full relations with Iran. The Iranian Government is insisting that we apologize for our part in the American hostage incident, and we, quite correctly, refuse to do so.

One specific recommendation made to the government in the report is that it establish a Canadian embassy in Damascus, Syria. There were rumours a month or so ago that the report had been leaked. I guess the Department of External Affairs got hold of it because they announced two days ago that they were establishing an embassy in Damascus. I think it was Mr. Kissinger who said some years ago—

Senator Leblanc: It was a leak.

Senator van Roggen:—"no war without Egypt, no peace without Syria." We felt it was appropriate for Canada to have a full embassy in Damascus and we applaud the present government for taking that action. I think it is only fair to say that the lack of an embassy there was not a glaring hole that had existed for a long time. Canada had few embassies in many of these countries up until 10 or 15 years ago and since then, there has been an ongoing program to establish embassies in these countries. This is certainly a further step, which we applaud, in that direction.

The report goes on to deal with peacekeeping—in which Canada is heavily involved in various areas in the Middle East—diplomatic representation, trade, development assistance, immigration, and so forth. The body of the report—and I think this is very important—frequently records opposing perceptions of witnesses and should be read in its entirety, when, I believe, most people will agree that it is a fair and balanced report.

● (1440)

Hon. Nathan Nurgitz: Honourable senators, I rise today out of a deep sense of regret and concern. At the outset, I wish to state for the record that I and one other honourable senator did not vote in support of the report of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, which has just been tabled by Senator van Roggen.

I will not try the patience of honourable senators by speaking at any length on this matter at this particular time. In fact, I propose to move the adjournment of the debate in a moment.

I do feel obliged, however, to say now that I sincerely regret the manner in which this reference, mandated to the Foreign Affairs Committee, has been, I believe, horribly abused. Honourable senators may recall that in the debate on the reference that took place in this chamber on June 15, 1982, Senator van Roggen said:

We are not launching upon this particular study on the basis of trying to arrive at a solution to the serious

problem that exists between Israel and the Arab states . . . we wish to address ourselves to the overall relationship between Canada and the Middle East from the points of view of trade, diplomatic representation, immigration and other matters involving the countries in that part of the world.

In the event this particular study evolved as an abortive Camp David North and contributes very little, in proportionate terms, to the overall relationship between Canada and the Middle East, and even less, if anything, in terms of North Africa. I am appalled.

Reference has been made by Senator van Roggen to two matters with which I will deal in substance later. One is the question of the treatment by the Canada-Israel Committee of the subcommittee's report; and secondly, at a later date I wish to deal at some length with the question of the subcommittee itself, which I was excluded from and therefore was unable to travel with, for reasons I will explain.

The report's treatment of matters pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict is, in my view, offensive, in that it is characterized by the use of much ill-deserved rhetoric directed against a country, Israel, with which Canada has enjoyed an important, long-standing and mutually beneficial relationship. I know that this relationship will endure despite what I consider to be this unfortunate offence.

Finally, we must consider that there is in this country a community, of which I am, to the deepest reaches of my soul, proud to be a part, which will also feel offended by this report. I am profoundly sorry for this. I am equally sorry that Senator Grafstein, who is also a member of the same community, and I were isolated in our opposition to the report. I hope, and indeed I believe, that our isolation in the committee is not reflected in this chamber, or, for that matter, outside of its precincts. To believe otherwise would be to negate everything that I have strived to achieve, everything that I have ever stood for during my public life and in my private life.

I refuse to accept the notion, notwithstanding this report, that I have misread or been deceived by so many people whom I have known and respected as friends and colleagues alike.

Honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. the Speaker: It is moved by the Honourable Senator Nurgitz, seconded by the Honourable Senator Marshall, that further debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the Senate. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, speaking to the motion for adjournment, which I assure Senator Nurgitz we have no intention of refusing or denying—

Senator Flynn: It is not debatable.

Senator Frith: All right, I am not debating it.

On a point of order, honourable senators, if Senator Nurgitz's motion carries now rather than later, it means, of course, that no other honourable senator who might want to speak on it can do so today. If that should happen, we only have on the