

That the Government of Canada formally support the boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games by the United States of America and that the Government take note of the resolution adopted by the Ontario Legislature, via a free vote, calling upon the Government of Canada to boycott the Games;

That the Government of Canada affirm its solidarity with the dissidents, cultural and religious minorities in the Soviet Union, who, like the people of Afghanistan, are now under totalitarian Soviet dictatorship; and

That the Government of Canada affirm Canada's strong continued support for international human rights and worldwide peace.

Hon. L. Norbert Thériault: Honourable senators, I rise on a point of order. I understand that the main body of the motion moved by the Honourable Senator Nurgitz refers to a matter that has already been resolved in the other place, and I wonder whether it is the practice, or in accordance with the rules, of this house that, in the circumstances, we should proceed with this motion.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): If I may speak to that point of order, I see no reason why the motion cannot be proceeded with as it is framed. It is quite true that some changes have taken place in one particular clause of this resolution since it was originally framed. However, I personally can see no objection to allowing the Honourable Senator Nurgitz to proceed with it. Indeed, if he wishes to comment upon the cancellation of the Games, as I would feel free to do if I were making a speech, I think it would be quite in order.

Hon. George J. McIlraith: If what the Honourable Senator Roblin has said is true—and I quite accept that it is—surely the correct procedure is for the mover of the motion to make the necessary amendment in the paragraph of his motion that appears to be slightly out of date in its wording. Surely that would be correct procedure in the circumstances. I do not think there should be any difficulty with making the necessary changes in the wording of this particular motion.

● (1610)

Senator Roblin: I see no reason for that. If that were the case, the resolution would have to be dropped from the order paper and reintroduced at a later time. If the mover of the motion, in the course of his remarks, wishes to make any reference to that point, I think that would be quite in order. I can see no parliamentary way of amending this resolution without withdrawing it and proceeding with it again.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Speaking to the point of order, the point raised by Senator Thériault is evidently one of interest, but I think a combination of the suggestions by Senator Roblin and Senator McIlraith would solve the problem. It is my respectful submission that we allow Senator Nurgitz to proceed. He can make comments of an amending nature. I think that is Senator Roblin's idea, and that would, I think, also comply with the point well taken by Senator McIlraith.

[Senator Nurgitz.]

Senator Thériault: Honourable senators, far be it from me to prevent Senator Nurgitz from proceeding. As many senators present are aware, I have been in Parliament and the provincial legislature for 20 years or so, and in that respect I am always interested in procedure and decisions made in that regard. I do not necessarily agree with Senator Roblin when he says that there is no way of amending the motion without dropping it. If these are the procedures followed in this chamber, well and good. I just want to be informed. With any legislature or Parliament, the house is always the master of its own destiny, and with unanimous consent of the house, the motion could be amended and proceeded with.

Senator Roblin: I am not going to give consent.

Hon. Nathan Nurgitz: Honourable senators, at the outset, I do commend the government's action announced yesterday by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the other place. I am pleased that the Government of Canada will boycott the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

I suppose there are some more partisan who might argue that this government has moved too slowly, but I am, honourable senators, pleased and proud that it has indeed moved in the right direction and I applaud them for this. I think the people of Canada approve of the boycott and, what is perhaps more important, I think people in all parts of the free world approve of it.

If there is anything that has become apparent once again during the last few years, it is our interdependence within an ever more difficult and challenging world. While we may have occasional disputes with our neighbours to the south, we share a common strategic interest and responsibility that must not be underestimated. Our world position, as a free and independent nation, is not diminished by our capacity to know who our friends are, and to act accordingly. Independence is not diminished by loyalty. Freedom to support one's friends is, I suggest, what the free world is all about.

Honourable senators, I am delighted that the present government has adopted the position of the former government of Prime Minister Clark in support of the boycott, thereby renouncing, hopefully to some extent, any significant partisan decision on this issue, an issue which surely commands from each and every one of us a farsighted view beyond the bonds of partisanship.

The heroism of Ambassador Taylor stood as a lonely beacon of friendship to our American neighbours at a particularly low time for them. It is fitting that we should have moved on this front, to advance and deepen that friendship, at a time when Americans will remember precisely who their friends are.

Honourable senators, I know there is no naiveté in this chamber about the international intentions of the Soviet Union. Their record is discouragingly consistent. Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan—the actions speak clearly of the ever-present Soviet threat. The world reacted angrily to incursions in eastern Europe. Surely, we must not overlook the Afghanistan adventure simply because our cultures and ways of life are so different.