

mitment to help the underdeveloped countries upgrade and strengthen their economies. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to repeat that this government is determined to see that bill and the principles involved passed as quickly as possible. I therefore ask the members of this House to extend their usual co-operation so that we may undertake with dispatch the consideration of the various stages of the bill and, to do so, Mr. Speaker, the support and understanding of all members are essential. I am sure that in committee we will have a chance to examine more extensively the clauses of the bill and that our proceedings will be more than fruitful in the interests of Canadians.

● (1650)

[English]

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I thank somebody in the department for providing me with a copy of the minister's speech so I could follow him line by line in the English version. It still does not answer the questions which I raised in my point of order with regard to the New Zealand trade agreement.

If we look at the bill, what is being done is deleting New Zealand from the British preferential tariff listed in the annex to the Customs tariff which, incidentally, those who are in visual reach of this can see how thick it is. Subsection 3(2) lists some 60 countries, plus or minus, throughout the world which, after this bill goes into effect, will enjoy the British preferential tariff. Neither England nor Ireland and now New Zealand will enjoy the BP.

I wish the minister would pay particular attention here because a better procedure will have to be adopted in the future when Canada negotiates more bilateral agreements with countries of the Commonwealth to which British preferential tariff rates will no longer apply and which will have their own specific rates.

This agreement is being incorporated into the Customs tariff by those items covered by the agreement. New Zealand is withdrawn and there is a special category called "New Zealand". I suppose if our friends the Australians are the next ones, we will have a section in the Customs tariff listing Australia. How about Malawi, Kenya, Trinidad and Tobago, the more important of the Caribbean Islands, Jamaica, and all of those? Are they going to be subject to these special agreements?

Are we going to see the same sort of procedure adopted in amending the Customs tariff so that nowhere in a statute book one could, as one could hitherto, see what is a New Zealand-Canada trade agreement? I do not know who is being more clever by half in trying to think that they can get away from a debate on a bill that Parliament is required to pass to incorporate and give legal sanction to such a trade agreement.

● (1700)

I suppose some smart-alec says that the passing of Bill C-90 to amend the Customs Tariff Act will mean that Parliament

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will adopt this Canada-New Zealand trade agreement. That is nonsense. The agreement has a number of provisions which do not come under the Customs tariff listings. For instance, the notice of default which I mentioned earlier is one of those provisions. What about the requirements for changes? I have a press release which was issued by the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. Lumley) and his opposite number in the New Zealand government. It is the usual joint communiqué which is issued by ministers. This release was issued in September and indicates that the trade agreement is supposed to provide more flexible ways of dealing with trade problems. The release states:

Mr. Lumley indicated that the federal government had consulted closely with Canadian industry and provinces prior to the renegotiation of the agreement and that there was widespread support for the continuation of preferential trade arrangements with New Zealand. "I am confident that the new agreement will constitute a positive framework within which Canadian businessmen can pursue the many opportunities for trade and investment in the New Zealand market," Mr. Lumley said.

Balderdash. How do we know that? There is no opportunity to question the minister on this agreement or its provisions. This agreement is important to Canada.

What about an agreement with Australia? Will that again be bootlegged under the table? That is improper.

The bill before us is destined to remain in the House and be discussed in the Committee of the Whole. There is no opportunity to question businessmen or, for that matter, the minister—no opportunity for anyone to testify before the committee. In other words, everything is being kept under wraps. No information is being given out. Oh, I will have a copy of the trade agreement because the minister apparently tabled one.

Mr. Bussi res: Go and get one.

Mr. Lambert: We will have to get it in the usual way, from the *Journals*.

At any rate, this is a ridiculous way of carrying on. No one can understand it. No lawyer who is acting on behalf of a province, for example, can look up in the Statutes of Canada to see what the trade agreement with New Zealand is. This should be made possible with all agreements.

However, according to the government, the end always justifies the means. There is an agreement, and it has been done quietly. Why is it done in this way? I presume that the government wanted that much less debate about it. There would not be, as there was, an opportunity for members from western Canada to examine individuals about meat quotas. Hon. members will recall the fuss which occurred a few years ago in western Canada over the importation of cut beef from the Pacific Rim countries, including New Zealand, which passed through Canadian quotas to the United States and which resulted in punitive action being taken by the Americans against Canadian beef producers. Such questions are germane to the examination of these agreements.

I am satisfied that the New Zealand government does not want to be part of any cover-up, but the procedure which was followed for this agreement is a total cover-up because there is