

*Government Orders*

happening is that the smaller countries are being absolutely, completely covered by the sheer bulk of red tape and financial power of the larger countries.

If we are not taking this into consideration, then we are going to make it very difficult for the smaller countries to trade at all. If we do not have trading partners, then we of course cannot trade. That is sort of self-explanatory, I would think. I do not think that even this government would question that.

I see that the Minister of Transport even understands it, which I think is very important. I know I have got through and that it is going to be generally understood at that point.

I want to say that we have to look at this on a world-wide basis. If we become too greedy and too possessive of the points of international trade, then we are going to very well kill the whole concept with respect to a great many of our would-be trading partners.

We, of course, as the member has said, are very interested in having the legal security and framework because this convention is quite in line with Canadian legal principles, which I think is very important.

I have one concern I would like to address before I recommend that this bill be accepted on second reading. I would caution the government on the cavalier way in which it is treating this bill. This bill, as the member for Niagara Falls has said, is tremendously important. It seems to be axiomatic, that is it is in the interest of Canada and its trading partners that this convention pass. The member said that 28 countries have ratified this bill.

If Canada is to maintain a leadership role in international trade, if we are to personify the trust that smaller countries want to have in their trading partners, then we have to be a little faster off the mark than we have been with regard to ratifying this convention.

We are going to be presumably number 29, if not farther down the list of countries ratifying this convention. That does not speak well for Canada. That does not speak well for a country that has always expressed an interest in the welfare of the Third World, of the poorer countries. We have gone out of our way to trade and offer funding through CIDA and other agencies to help

these smaller countries. We were able to trade with them in the interest of Canada and, of course, in the interest of these other countries as well.

We have been reluctant, it seems, to push this bill through. We have been reluctant to adopt the concept. We very well might have been laudatory of the concept in the United Nations, but after the music dies down, Canada seems to sort of sneak out the side door and cannot be found to pick up the tab or to endorse what it is that needs to be endorsed.

If this continually happens—and unfortunately we find that this is becoming something that is happening all too often—then Canada is going to lose its status, even more than it has in the international community. We will have no one to blame but ourselves. We are bringing this on ourselves. At the very best we are going to be number 29 in ratifying this contract. We are, one of the most highly industrialized nations in the world; one of the proponents of international trade, far above most of the other members of the United Nations. We have been a complete and utter leader in the bolstering of international trade and in safeguarding the interests of the Third World nations, and here we are lucky to be even 30th in endorsing this convention.

Eight provinces have already endorsed this convention. One territory has endorsed it, and we are now here in Parliament today being faced with this after a long, long delay. It is frankly embarrassing that this is only coming to the attention of the House at this particular time.

I do not want to take a great deal of time in debating this further. We in this party are most interested in having this bill sent to committee stage. I would hereby endorse second reading so that we can get on with this bill and discuss it in committee as quickly as possible. I ask the government to push it through, as quickly as it possibly can, its remaining stages.

**Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca):** Mr. Speaker, in the government's opening remarks on this bill there were three points that it wished to make in putting the bill forward. Two of them are ones that I will address my comments to.

One of course is the facilitation of trade, and the other one is greater equity in trade, that is equity between