

*Meteorological Convention*

much whether Canada has a great deal to gain, under present conditions, by becoming a member of this world meteorological organization. I know there is a temptation for Canada to join all these international organizations. It is like joining a club; we like to become members of these different organizations, and that is an attitude which can easily be understood.

**An hon. Member:** We are good joiners.

**Mr. Green:** Yes, that seems to be the picture. I am not saying that Canada should not join this world meteorological organization, but I am saying that before the house approves the convention we should send it to the committee on external affairs. That is a good committee, the members of which take their work seriously, and I am confident that they would go into the question thoroughly and bring back to the house a worth-while recommendation.

That is the course I urge upon the minister today. This convention instead of its being approved after two or three members have spoken, should be referred to the committee on external affairs, so that witnesses could be called to tell the whole story. Then if we do approve the convention we shall at least know what we are doing.

**Mr. Gordon Graydon (Peel):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to add a word to what has been so well said by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green). It is to be noted that this convention of the world meteorological organization was signed in Washington on October 11, 1947. Almost three years have passed without this country doing anything about its approval or ratification. This resolution was on the order paper in 1948, and I believe, although I am only speaking from memory, that it was on the order paper during the last session. The very fact that Canada took no immediate steps to ratify this convention speaks volumes. There is no particular reason why we should be rushing, toward the close of the session, to ratify a convention of this kind.

In addition a great deal of water has passed under the international bridge since 1947. Conditions with respect to the two-world position have changed, as have the considerations upon which the members of the United Nations founded their judgment in 1947. Moreover, one's suspicions—if one may use that harsh word; perhaps it is not appropriate, but I use it in any event—might be aroused by the lack of enthusiasm on the part of other members of the north Atlantic community. As I understand it, our powerful and friendly neighbour to the south has not

[Mr. Green.]

taken any steps to ratify this convention. Now that we are entering a new era in our defence program, still within the framework of the United Nations, it would seem to me that this convention ought not to pass with the sort of sporadic discussion that is possible in this kind of debate. We should examine the conditions which existed when the convention was signed, and contrast them with the conditions that now exist. If they were substantially the same, then perhaps our judgment ought to be that we should ratify the convention and conclude the matter at this time. But I believe there is sufficient reason, having in mind the changed world conditions, for a further review of the convention by a competent committee of this house before it is ratified. In a debate such as this, when the matter does not go to the committee of the whole, we have no opportunity to ask questions. Here we have a convention consisting of a considerable number of pages, dealing with one of the most vital parts of the defence program of the north Atlantic community—and at the time it was signed there was no such thing as the north Atlantic community. Yesterday the minister of external affairs showed us the draft blueprint of a new system of balanced collective defence. No doubt within that balanced collective defence there will be found what is covered by this convention—that is, the question of weather data. It may be said, of course, that this is a two-way street, and that we shall receive information from Russia. The past history of relations with the soviet has not been such as to indicate that it is a two-way street, because most of the information we have been able to get from Russia so far has been so infinitesimal as not to be capable of recognition. I believe the minister ought to take that into consideration, and seriously consider the proposal made by the member for Vancouver-Quadra.

So much has happened since this instrument was signed that I do not think we can afford to take a chance by simply warming over old cooking; we ought to know what is in it. The only way to ascertain that is in a committee where we can call experts with respect to the changed conditions since 1947.

I want to urge upon the minister the seriousness of this matter. I am afraid that the signing of this convention now may not be consonant with the policy which was announced yesterday, and which will be followed out by the deputies' committee meeting permanently as the focal point of the north Atlantic alliance.

I urge with all the earnestness I can summon that this resolution be not proceeded with until a competent committee—I suggest the