

I believe that this bill should not be passed by the Senate until we have received a more detailed explanation regarding the agreement, which will seriously affect the lives of the aboriginal people for many years into the future and, as a matter of fact, forever. I am therefore requesting that the bill be sent to committee for more thorough examination. Our sober second thought will give the bill better credibility. We want the Inuvialuit to get the best possible deal, as it will set a precedent for the settlement of claims of other native peoples. I may also wish to comment on third reading.

Senator Steuart: Honourable senators, I realize that if I speak now, it will have the effect of closing debate on second reading of this bill!

Hon. David Walker: Good.

Senator Steuart: I appreciate Senator Yuzyk's suggestion that this bill be referred to committee. We have made arrangements for that, and I am sure that officials will be present to answer any questions that honourable senators may have. This is a complicated bill and it is to be regretted that we have received it in the dying days of this session, and possibly of this Parliament. I would normally be quite angry about this, but in this case the situation was such that negotiations were concluded not very long ago, and by the time the government was able to prepare the legislation I believe it could not have gone through the Commons and the Senate much earlier.

The honourable senator mentioned one or two points on which I should like to comment. He said that one-fifth of the people voted against it. It is my experience with the Inuvialuit people, and with the Inuit people generally, that they are very democratic, and the people who were opposed to the legislation felt that there should be more money coming to the people immediately. That is why I believe that the \$7.5 million fund—which I understand will be used to provide some help, particularly to older people in the area—is a good thing.

On the question of holding meetings in secrecy, I have heard that charge raised before, and I do not believe it is fair. Negotiations were held by the people representing the Committee of the Original Peoples' Entitlement, which represented all of the Inuvialuit people. COPE people were elected quite regularly. When I was negotiator I held meetings in the north and invited the public to come and discuss freely the whole agreement in principle, which was signed before I became the negotiator. That document was circulated all over the north to all of the people concerned. Some of those who attended the meetings were quite angry about what they claimed to be the lack of democracy. I challenged them that elections were forthcoming and that if they did not like it they could run in the elections. I said it was not our job, coming from the south, or representing the government, or as negotiators, to tell them how to run their own affairs; that they should get out and run for election. Some of them did, and some who were opposed to the committee's negotiators were elected. However, there was no particular change.

Meetings were held by the negotiators, and the results of those meetings were quite widely circulated, so that all of the

[Senator Yuzyk.]

people had an opportunity to know what was going on, whether or not they agreed with it.

I consider Senator Yuzyk's remarks to be fair, and I know that he will probably have something to say in committee and on third reading.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Senator Steuart moved that the bill be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology.

Motion agreed to.

• (1650)

[Translation]

CUSTOMS TARIFF

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING

Hon. Fernand-E. Leblanc moved the second reading of Bill C-7, to amend the Customs Tariff.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased with this opportunity to present Bill C-7, an Act to amend the Customs Tariff.

This bill would enact the amendments to the Customs Tariff announced in the Notice of Ways and Means tabled by the Minister of Finance on April 19, 1983 with the budget brought down on that date.

The changes have been in effect on a temporary basis, since the day after the budget.

I do not intend to repeat the comments of the Minister of Finance.

First of all, the bill provides for improvements in the general preferential tariff (GPT) for developing countries. It proposes new or lower GPT rates, and especially a "free" rate for a broad range of products, in accordance with the recommendation made in Part II of the Tariff Board's report. The SPT has been extended for an additional period of ten years, until June 30, 1994. The rules of origin are being amended so that value added in any GPT country will count towards the national content that products must have to be allowed entry at GPT rates.

Second, the bill raises the value limitations on goods that Canadians returning from abroad may bring back duty- and tax-free. The main increases in tourist exemptions will raise the quarterly exemption after an absence of not less than 48 hours from \$50 to \$100; the annual exemption, available once a year after an absence of not less than seven days, is being increased from \$150 to \$300. I think there may be a conflict of interest here, because I occasionally take advantage of this exemption, like many other senators, I suppose.

Third, the bill provides for higher rates for feed pellet mill dies and rolls and a number of bulldozer parts. These are