

*Legal Assistance*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Not for the first three speakers.

**Mr. Skelly:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to participate in the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Therefore, the Hon. Member for Comox—Powell River (Mr. Skelly) has the floor on debate. Before we proceed—after the conversation is finished—perhaps I could direct the Hon. Member to Standing Order 55(2). The Hon. Member will now have 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for questions and comments. If there are any further conversations, I wish Hon. Members would have them in the lobbies. The Hon. Member for Comox—Powell River.

**Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, I will speak to my colleagues about this massive breach of etiquette in the House of Commons. One of our colleagues from the other side of the House seems to want to speak. Undoubtedly she will speak on this Bill; we will listen breathless and spellbound to her contributions.

I would like to offer congratulations to my colleague, the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson), who expressed some very serious concerns in a number of areas about the legislation before the House today. First, is Canada negotiating effectively with the United States in the development of the number of treaties and arrangements that we have seen come through the House? He gave examples to show that the answer is no.

In the minds of most Members of this House on all sides, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) of Canada has involved himself in a massive giveaway. To the Americans, without question and without an attempt to negotiate, have gone such things as the salmon interception treaty on the West Coast and the present legislation before us today. In the minds of most Canadians the Conservative Government and the Prime Minister are involved in a massive giveaway in an attempt to secure a free trade agreement. It is time that we as Canadians dug in and began to negotiate effectively.

This Parliament should not pass this Bill without changes. The Prime Minister should be digging in his heels with the Americans on the question of the salmon interception treaty on the West Coast. We have no effective authority over our resources in the Yukon River. That was an omission. The problem was known but we heard that it might offend the Americans and the President if we began to ask for things that belonged to us and which might jeopardize the free trade agreement.

There were the summit meetings between the Prime Minister and the United States President. Instead of dealing effectively with Canadian resources in the transboundary rivers that cross southeast Alaska flowing into the Province of British Columbia, which rivers contain large fish stock originating in Canadian waters, the Prime Minister gave those away without a thought. In addition, we have a very poor interception agreement with the United States.

At the present time Canadians are losers in this massive giveaway in the attempt to obtain a free trade agreement with the United States. The legislation presently before the House is another example of failure to negotiate effectively. We are involved in other serious matters of negotiations with the United States, and we could use this Bill and the arrangements as leverage. I am speaking of what is called the A-B line, the boundary between Canada and the United States, between southeast Alaska and British Columbia. There have been numerous provocations in that disputed area by the U.S. Coast Guard. The U.S. Coast Guard has arrested Canadian fishermen, seized their catches and hauled them into court in Ketchikan, Alaska, in a completely unjust manner. Canadian fishermen who had been fishing in areas designated on Canadian maps as being Canadian territory have been arrested by the U.S. Coast Guard, hauled into Ketchikan, Alaska, and had their catches seized. There have been a great many threats of violence against them.

● (1230)

If the Prime Minister of Canada were fulfilling his obligations to Canadians, he would be raising these matters with the American President and suggesting that proper processes be used by the Americans in disputes. We would be prepared to co-operate with the Americans in many areas of legitimate negotiations if in fact their behaviour in certain areas was acceptable.

As well, the Americans gave petroleum leases across the A-B line in absolute rejection of anything that would seem reasonable. Yet it seems we did not raise any kind of concern about that at the Shamrock Summit. No, indeed, the Prime Minister of Canada is quite prepared to give away points on the salmon interception treaty and quite prepared to fail to observe the kinds of infractions that are going on in the northwest corner of British Columbia over the A-B line.

We do not negotiate with the United States. The Conservative Government and the Prime Minister and, indeed, the past Liberal Government have virtually given away Canadian rights and Canadian sovereignty without raising substantial efforts at negotiation. This is the record, and I think it was shown effectively by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Burnaby, when he spoke today. He pointed out that this is a result of a treaty which is a give-away and that we as Canadians under the present Conservative Government are being badly served in our negotiations with the United States.

The legislation before the House assists in law enforcement matters. It was pointed out that this legislation is too far reaching and allows the involvement of law-enforcement procedures from a foreign country in Canada too early. The Hon. Member pointed out the problems involved with having demands for investigative action taking place in Canada before charges are laid, a new item over which there is concern.