

March, May, and June where it was my understanding, in looking at *Hansard*, that all Parties supported a change in the death rule.

I had forwarded to the clerk of the committee on aboriginal affairs, and the two spokesmen from the opposition Parties, draft comments on the legislation regarding the remedial action needed to correct this inadequacy in Bill C-31. I received support from the Hon. Member for Cochrane—Superior (Mr. Penner). I believe that the actions we have taken and will take will correct the problem.

In referring to the press release, Mr. Speaker, if it is read in pieces, it does lead one to infer that action has already been taken. I am sorry if that is the way the press release was presented, but in no way has the ability of the standing committee on aboriginal affairs been impinged to reply on Bill C-31.

If the Hon. Member for Skeena suggests that there is not all-Party support for the changing of the death rule as it applies to Bill C-31, I can correct that and state that I believe I have the support of the Hon. Member for Cochrane—Superior and his Party and of the Government to change that.

Mr. Speaker: This matter refers to a question of privilege raised by the Hon. Member for Skeena several days ago. The Chair has not decided whether or not it is a question of privilege. Listening carefully to the Hon. Minister's remarks, I take it he concedes that at least part of the press release was inaccurate; am I correct in understanding that?

Mr. McKnight: It could be viewed as misleading.

Mr. Speaker: From what the Hon. Minister has said, I take it that he is expressing his regret, and that may well end the issue. However, naturally there may be some debate between the Hon. Member for Skeena and the Minister about what may or may not flow from that. However, I will hear the Hon. Member for Skeena in response.

● (1510)

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister. I think his remarks were kind, useful, and helpful to those people who did misunderstand the intent of the press release. It was widely carried in the media, quite often as a letter to the editor, and a great deal of confusion was caused in many areas of the country where the death rule has been a problem.

With respect to all-Party support in the way it was worded there is no doubt in principle that all three Parties want the death rule amended. When I raised the matter on Friday the way I did, I wanted to make it clear to the Minister that I had contacted his office and was refused the opportunity of being provided with what I thought might be another draft.

There is an earlier draft of some months ago which I think the Minister, a member of the Liberal Party, and myself have seen, but following the press release I thought some other

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action might have been taken and I wanted to peruse the new amendment. If it is the same amendment as before, perhaps the Minister could indicate that that is still the case.

I thank the Minister for having cleared on the record the problem with the misunderstanding right across the country.

Mr. Speaker: As I indicated, there may be some question that both the Hon. Member and the Hon. Minister may want to discuss and that might be a very convenient thing to do.

First, I want to say that the complaint brought to the House by the Hon. Member for Skeena was clearly a justifiable complaint. It may not have been a question of privilege but it was certainly a complaint.

I want to thank the Hon. Minister for coming into the House at the first opportunity and very clearly acknowledging that perhaps at least in some particulars the press release was not as carefully drafted as it should have been. I think that ends the issue.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed from Friday, August 12, consideration of Bill C-130, an Act to implement the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States of America, as reported (with amendments) from a legislative committee; and the amendments of Mr. Axworthy:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-130 be amended in Clause 2 by adding immediately after line 21 at page 2 the following:

"Canada" means the territory to which Canadian customs laws apply, including any areas beyond the territorial seas of Canada within which, in accordance with international law and its domestic laws, Canada may exercise rights with respect to the seabed and subsoil and their natural resources;"

Motion No. 61

That Bill C-130 be amended in Clause 60 by adding immediately after line 28 at page 52 the following:

"Canada" means the territory to which Canadian customs laws apply, including any areas beyond the territorial seas of Canada within which, in accordance with international law and its domestic laws, Canada may exercise rights with respect to the seabed and subsoil and their natural resources;"

Motion No. 65

That Bill C-130 be amended in Clause 76 by adding immediately after line 3 at page 62 the following:

"and "Canada" means the territory to which Canadian customs laws apply, including any areas beyond the territorial seas of Canada within which, in accordance with international law and its domestic laws, Canada may exercise rights with respect to the seabed and subsoil and their natural resources."