

Public participation in the correctional service of Canada is at an all-time high. This has a great deal to do with another recommendation of the 1977 subcommittee report. Recommendation No. 25 states that the penitentiary system—

● (1800)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. The Chair regrets to interrupt the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary, but the time allotted for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now come to an end.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 45 deemed to have been moved.

FISHERIES—POSSIBLE IMPACT OF UNITED STATES OIL LEASE PROGRAM ON WEST COAST FISHERY. (B) ENVIRONMENTAL HEARINGS IN ALASKA

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, on May 18, as recorded at page 3869 of *Hansard*, I tried to find out from the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. De Bané) whether the concerns of his Department had been taken into account in a diplomatic note delivered to the U.S. State Department in Washington the week before. As far as we can make out, because, we have not seen the text of the note, it was protesting quite rightly certain Maritime claims that the U.S. authorities appeared to be making in northern B.C. waters.

As I say, I agree fully that the note on the sovereignty aspects of that particular problem was due to be delivered to the U.S. and I am glad it was. But without being too precise, the Minister brushed off my question as virtually inconsequential by stating that decisions, presumably relating to the note delivered by our Government, are decisions that involve all Departments. That barely deals with my concerns. Mr. Speaker. It was a clever answer, but it literally did not address itself to the question I had put to the Minister. I have still to be satisfied that the other matter which concerned me at that time had been taken into account. Perhaps I should explain.

The U.S. Department of the Interior announced a call for tenders to explore for gas and petroleum in certain waters off the Alaska coast. In one of their publications, comparable to our *Gazette*, called the *National Register*, they describe it as the Gulf of Alaska. That covers a great area of territory to the west of the Panhandle, out into the Gulf and down into the A-B Line which defines the boundary between Canada and the United States. The schematic charts published with this call include one area designated as the Gulf of Alaska which infringed, in its southern boundary claims, into waters which

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are not, in Canada's eyes, U.S. waters at all. That I believe was what the note was all about.

There is another aspect to which I was drawing attention, and that had to do with environmental concerns. I am not sure that the note dealt with them. What the Minister was evading, I suppose is the correct word, was any notion that the environmental concerns in that area had been dealt with in that note. Fish sometimes go through other people's territory to get to the high seas, and fish bred in Canada go through the Panhandle out into the Gulf of Alaska. If there is drilling, exploration and contamination in that area, and Canadian fish are going through that area, either upstream or downstream to the breeding grounds or out to sea, there is a hazard to Canadian resources. That is what I wanted to know from the Minister. I hope that the spokesman for the Minister will be able to assure me that not only the sovereignty claim but also the environmental concerns that I was seeking to express were taken into account in that particular note.

● (1805)

There are three rivers which are salmon breeding rivers in that area. They come out through what is known as the Panhandle there. The fish in the Stikine, the Nass and the Taku Rivers all have to come out through the Panhandle as well as fish possibly even from the Skeena.

I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary who will reply to this question if he can assure me that the note that was sent to the United States on the sovereignty issue also dealt with the issue of the environment and the safety of Canadian fish. If so, I am deeply reassured. I hope he will be able to let me know—perhaps not tonight—that the text of the note will be made available to the House. It is a very important issue.

There is a related issue that may very well come up in the not too distant future. It concerns another territorial claim to the east of the 141st meridian which divides the Territory of Yukon from Alaska, extended out to the Arctic Ocean. However, I am not dealing with that tonight, only with the environmental issue in the Gulf of Alaska.

Mr. Maurice Harquail (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, from my viewpoint, herein lies the benefit of having this portion of debate set aside for clarification. First, there is no grounds for him to use the word "evading". Let me make that point very clear for the Hon. Member. There is no evasion on the part of anyone.

The Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro) has raised the issue of the possible environmental and fisheries impacts of the United States lease program in the waters off the Alaskan Panhandle. The Hon. Member is making reference to the recent publication in the U.S. Federal Register of the United States' intention to offer oil and gas exploration leases for certain areas on the Continental Shelf on the West Coast. I should point out, however, that the leases in question do not cover the area within Dixon Entrance itself, but are