

organizations represented on MAC are in the dark as well. Certainly Parliament has no access to that information.

The question of accountability in the fishing industry is a major concern. For the last year and a half we have known that the Minister has been consulting with the industry, but we still see no recommendations that are suitable to the fishing industry and no indication of where the Minister and his Government feel priority should be placed. For instance, will we indeed see a major reduction in the fishing industry in the commercial fleet, as the Minister suggested in his speech today? Has he decided how that will impact on coastal communities in employment opportunities in the B.C. fishing industry and whether that will lead to more unemployment insurance and human resources demands in the Province of British Columbia?

The NDP puts employment opportunities as a top priority in the fishing industry. If there will be a reduction in the fleet, we have indicated that the suggestion by the Ministerial Advisory Committee of a 20 per cent reduction is a beginning, if that is in fact what it is recommending. The Cruickshank report, which specifically outlines reductions in the fleets, takes into consideration concerns about employment and habitat. The recommendations of Cruickshank for a 21 per cent reduction in fleet, with specific gear types being mentioned, is a good starting point for taking some of the pressure off the fisheries resource, which we all recognize is seriously depleted, partially because of overfishing.

The access to resources is an important issue. The Minister mentioned the problems that his Ministry is having in deciding on adequate allocation of those resources. The first priority is to make sure that those resources are maintained and enhanced. This can be achieved through better management, habitat protection, salmonid enhancement and, to some extent, through reducing the size of the fleet in the commercial sector. This is also accomplished by getting some agreement between user groups in terms of their own access to that resource.

Our Party supports in principle an increase in native Indian involvement in the fishing industry, whether that is through increased activity in the commercial fishery or through increased opportunity in mariculture and aquaculture. I am not suggesting ocean ranching or fish farming. Certainly mariculture in resources such as oysters, muscles, clams and seaweeds on the West Coast, where native Indian reserves are strategically located to take advantage of them, is an industry that Canada, both federally and provincially, has failed to exploit or to initiate adequate activities.

There are number of other issues I wish to discuss briefly in the limited time I have today. The Minister indicated his willingness last week to tell the Americans that this Government was no longer going to continue negotiations in Seattle. I congratulate the Minister for taking that stand. We were certainly concerned that Canada was again going to back down to American pressure over Canadian stocks and there-

fore deplete employment opportunities in British Columbia even further.

An Hon. Member: It has happened before.

Mr. Miller: It has happened in 1971 when we went into those negotiations on the basis that the nations involved would catch their own fish and limit interception as much as possible. We have strayed from that principle, and I would suggest to the Minister that another policy which he could adopt from the NDP would be to return to the 1971 principle. That principle is that, as much as possible, Canadians should catch Canadian-raised salmon while U.S. fishermen should as much as possible catch fish raised in American rivers.

We are also concerned about Canadian-Japanese negotiations. Part of the submission that we will receive from British Columbia next week indicates that the high seas fishery is a major threat to Canadian stocks of coho and chinook in particular. The high seas fishery is run basically by Japanese fishermen using nine-mile long gill nets, if one can imagine that. Their fishery involves four factory ships, 43 gill-net vessels, for a total of some 1,548 miles of net on the high seas. The catch is estimated at over seven million fish, of which 107,000 is chinook and 1.2 million is coho. There is no tagging program which would indicate how many of those fish were Canadian and how much of that resource Canadian fishermen are losing as a result of the high seas fishing.

The Minister should take the responsibility of meeting with U.S. elected officials, senators and governors from Alaska, Washington and Oregon, as well as in Washington, D.C., to initiate some resolution to a very serious problem. British Columbians know that we require a salmon agreement with the United States. They are becoming afraid that if that agreement does not occur very soon, Canadian stocks of chinook and coho in particular will meet even greater threats to their very existence.

• (1530)

We should also encourage the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. De Bané) to make some approaches to the Government of British Columbia, a government which refuses to set up a ministry of fisheries and oceans or a ministry of fisheries so that there can be consultation between the Province of British Columbia and the federal Government. Without adequate agreements between the federal Government and the Government of British Columbia, a government which is practising restraint, cutting back on the salmonid enhancement investment, a government which is not very much committed to habitat protection, we will suffer further declines in habitat protection. Also there will be a further deterioration in the ability of the Salmonid Enhancement Program to produce fish for the commercial, native and sports fisheries, and there will be a continuation of secrecy between the federal Government and the Ministerial Advisory Committee.