

The Budget—Mr. Skelly

opinion, and I think this opinion is shared by many Members of the House, that the Government will fail to act until after the next election on many of the important principles on which the House could act now to put native people at least on an improved footing to share more meaningfully in the wealth and the benefits of this country.

It is an absolute tragedy that the Government failed to put forward its special responsibility in a prominent way in the Budget.

The last item I would like to raise, because of its prominence and importance, is the fishing industry on the West Coast of Canada. That industry is in a serious and difficult situation. There is the potential for massive dislocation of both fishermen and coastal communities which depend upon the fishing industry. There are some very serious problems which the Government is compounding, in my view. The failure of the Government to listen and to consult in an effective and meaningful way with the various participants in this industry has led to a very divisive situation in which a variety of user groups are now in conflict not only with the Government but with each other as well. This will never lead to a solution to the problem. Effective consultation is extremely important. It would be almost as important for the Minister to go back to square one to try to pull the groups together and find a common approach so as to resolve this problem.

● (1700)

The Budget failed to address the non-controversial aspects of strengthening and improving the West Coast fishing industry. Also no resources are allocated in the Budget for enhancement of habitat protection. We are facing the Kemano completion project, the Quinsom coal project and logging out of our river valleys. The Government could have acted on these things with the unanimous agreement of all user groups. A pittance is being put forward under the Salmonid Enhancement Program, whereas a massive amount of funding is required. We need enforcement in that industry. Additional resources should be put into enforcement in that industry, especially now that things are so difficult. Catch allocations are almost cut in half. There will be more and more pressure. We need more enforcement.

My last point concerns high seas interception. Why are we enhancing salmon stock if they are simply being picked up by Japanese and Asian fishing fleets in the mid-Pacific? There is serious concern about American interception of our resources. At this point in time, one non-controversial aspect for which the Government could provide funding is a very detailed research program into the effect of the high seas fishing effort of Asian fleets on Canadian salmonid resources.

It is unfortunate that the Government—and certainly it was in tune with solving problems on the East Coast—largely ignored in this Budget many of the important non-controversial aspects of the West Coast fishing industry. By and large, with the comments I have heard in the House and the observations I have made of the province in which I live and the riding

which I represent, I certainly do not share the enthusiasm of the previous speaker for the document we find before us today.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) a couple of questions. One concerns the subjects of unemployment and job creation which he mentioned in his remarks. Some of us have viewed with some consternation and puzzlement the continuing claims of the Government that it has created more jobs in a shorter period of time—I believe that is the claim—than almost any other government in the western industrialized world.

Perhaps his assessment or judgment is similar to mine. We are seeing something similar to a recycled old western movie where the cavalry continually goes by the gap in the canyon. There are many short-term jobs, so they are continually recycled and regurgitated. Actually they are not jobs in the normal sense of the word. That is my impression of many of these programs. As desirable as many of them may be, they have a short-term impact. Is the Hon. Member's assessment similar to that of my own? What is his experience with those programs in his constituency?

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, the question of job-creation programs points to several things. First, there is a great deal of political patronage involved in the business of job creation. That certainly has not given an opportunity for communities to put forward suggestions that would use those job-creation dollars to the best effect or give the biggest bang for the dollar. There have been some tragic examples of how political patronage has distorted the fair efforts of the Government to try to create meaningful jobs and economic opportunities in communities. Political patronage is a very serious flaw in the job-creation program.

Second, there is no effective mechanism for community consultation. Unfortunately there has been a cut-back of public servants who do the evaluation. There has been a failure to put forward a small amount of resources to make effective the consultation process. Sometimes a little seed money in a community through a job-creation program can create an enormous effect in terms of the community bringing forward a long-standing, solid economic program. I could point to the communities of Powell River and Alert Bay. In these areas small amounts of money have in fact helped. Certainly the Government does not go nearly far enough. I could point to another very successful program where we used Canada Works money in my riding. I was very pleased that the Government was able to assist us with this money to hire employment enhancement workers. The jobs of each one of those people were worth about \$5,000 in Canada Employment funds. They created, along with the committees with which they worked, about \$1 million per person worth of economic activity. I have tremendous praise for those three people. The cost was \$15,000 and they generated roughly \$3 million worth of activity.

The third factor is the single-industry town problem in which the focus of employment activity for Canada Works