

the shoreline of my riding. They were declaring a moratorium after they had let MacMillan Bloedel build one more big booming ground. The purpose of the press release was to suggest that the moratorium would apply after this big booming ground had been completed. Bark drops and decays and hydrogen sulphide develop and poison the water so that fish and fry can no longer use it and those areas stay poisoned for roughly 25 years. There are areas in the Comox estuary where these same logging companies have deposited a layer of bark and decaying material in which there is no oxygen and a substantial amount of hydrogen sulphide; no fish are capable of living in such waters. I suggest to the parliamentary secretary—and I would suggest it to the minister if he were here—that action on environmental issues associated with the fisheries would bear tremendous benefits, especially assertive action which would protect the base upon which the entire industry is structured. This is extremely important, and I suggest the minister and the government of the country have been negligent in defending that aspect.

We desperately need a coast-line management act to protect foreshore, estuary and habitat. There is not much point in continuing discussion of the Kemano project after the hon. member for Skeena has dealt with it but I should like to suggest one further aspect. The Kemano project is a conflict in resources; electricity has become more valuable than fish. When we look at its location, it is on the central coast of British Columbia. Some of the streams will eventually back up, ensuring a decrease in fishing, fish habitat and fishery capabilities on the central coast of British Columbia. It will be one further erosion of the capacity of people in that area to earn a living, as well as constituting an environmental disaster. Basically we are suffering from a tremendous degree of negligence in terms of preserving the environment upon which the west coast fishing industry relies. When we lose this environment—and we are continuing to lose it at a faster and faster rate—then we will not have to worry about buy-back programs, overcapitalization, a salmon enhancement program, reserving manpower or budgetary requirements, because we will have destroyed the capability to support that industry. It is extremely important that this be recognized and acted upon.

I think the area of management has been covered pretty well today. We have looked at the question of research, enforcement, the licensing scheme, possibilities for the allocation of fish, overcapitalization and so on; we have talked about consultation and concentration. Some key topics were developed today in terms of their impact upon the west coast fishery, but I should like to add a few comments of my own. Research is extremely important. It does not show. The hon. member for Nanaimo-Alberni suggested that it is not a very glamorous aspect and that it takes a lot of input over a long period of time before benefits are developed. It does not show like a new hatchery or a new fishing vessel. But it is absolutely vital. If we cut back long-term research commitments, or if we cut

back on research at all, we will pay the price in the long run, because we will not be able to support the industry.

Other bizarre things seem to be happening there. Rather than budgeting or paying out of the budget for a planned research program, we now seem to be bargaining to get fishing vessel owners to undertake support programs for research, and we are paying them with a catch allocation. We seem to have grabbed the Japanese to come in and to research for us, because we are not willing to pay Canadian vessel owners to undertake some of that research. We are exchanging research undertakings for the right to catch fish. I suggest that is absolutely wrong. Since it is one of the pillars that support this very vital industry, we must plan our long-term research commitment and we must allocate the required resources. We should be supporting Canadian vessel owners and Canadian crews in undertaking that research, in developing the expertise within our own industry. Essentially we should be creating that employment and expertise here so that we can improve our own industry and not turn it back to the Japanese. Enough of it is controlled there already.

● (1740)

I would like to express my thoughts on enforcement, as well. We do not have enough fisheries officers. The government seems to be committed to cutbacks in staffing, in support services, in a whole variety of areas. There is a mentality which favours cutting back the civil service which provides these very vital services to the citizens of this country. It appears to me, though, that if we withdraw budget support for these essential programs we are really adopting on a penny wise and pound foolish approach. We should make a solid commitment to enforcement, provide expert fisheries personnel who can monitor these environmental problems, go after violators who degrade the natural habitat, and see to the enforcement of conservation program. Not only that, in the final analysis the government has got to back them up when they lay charges, when they say, for example, that a foreshore should not be paved in order to meet values which are less in the long term than the value of the fisheries. The government should be backing these people up. Without such backing, financial commitment and person-years, we might as well forget it because we will never really know what is developing and what is going wrong in that industry.

Enforcement is an extremely serious part of this process and we are not living up to our full commitment. With respect to the licensing scheme the two parliamentary secretaries who preceded me said it had come out better than sliced bread. Well, judging from the people I dealt with—this is probably the single largest file in my office—there are tremendous problems. People have been put out of the industry and lost their livelihood because of that licensing system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired. He may continue only with unanimous consent of the House.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.