

Supply

life—from the moment the fertilized eggs are secured in clean gravel to that dramatic time when these great fish spend their last days in the creation of another generation of their species.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Miller: Mr. Speaker, I have a question which I would like to ask of the Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser). He is aware that there is a project in British Columbia which will have some significant impacts upon salmon stocks if indeed it is given approval to go ahead. I am referring to the Kemano II Project which is now being termed the Kemano Completion Project by Alcan. Would the Hon. Member support the New Democratic Party request that a public inquiry with regard to that project be sponsored by the federal Government?

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to accept that question. The Hon. Member and others will remember that when I was Minister of the Environment and the publicity first broke in British Columbia with respect to the plans of Alcan to proceed with the Kemano Completion Project, I said, because there was a suggestion that they could do anything they wanted because of the contract into which they had entered with the Government of British Columbia in 1950, that I would insist upon an environmental assessment review process hearing being held. I said that if necessary, in order to accommodate that, I would broaden the guidelines which governed those federal hearings. I also said that I was prepared to enter into arrangements with the provincial government so that provincial representation could be on a joint board.

My understanding of the situation at the moment is that the company has applied to the utilities commission under British Columbia legislation. Of course, there will be a hearing. One of the difficulties is that there is some suggestion that intervenors will not be funded before that provincial hearing. I would hope the NDP would join with me in insisting that representations be made to the provincial government that intervenors be funded and, in the event that is not done, that the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans fund those intervenors.

● (1420)

With respect to the specific question my hon. friend asked me as to whether I would favour a hearing or a public inquiry, I do. What concerns me is whether that forum will get a completely clear picture of the proposed industrial development. I do not think that that is possible if interested third parties are denied the right to intervene.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the comments of the Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser). I know of his great interest in the B.C. fishery. He has expressed this many times.

The problem in British Columbia is not a simple one. It is very complex. I would like to make a quick observation. On the one hand, we have a shortfall in the ingredients required to make the commercial fishery viable. On the other hand, we have an increasing demand. I worry about the lobby groups I see being formed on both sides, the political lobby groups, and the money being solicited to lobby and the greater demand from the sport fishery for participation. The constant factor is that everyone agrees there is a necessity for a reduction in catch if we are going to protect the salmon despite who the users may ultimately be.

I did not hear this during his comments, and I would ask him specifically to state what he recommends to the Government. We have lobby groups from both sides coming to talk to us. One talks about the lack of ingredients for economic viability. The other says that they only have 4 per cent or 5 per cent of the catch and they want greater access. Given that kind of dilemma, what kind of advice does the Hon. Member propose for this Government? We can all comment on the seriousness of the problem but I have not heard specific solutions as to how to resolve it.

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. friend for the question. The question is legitimate and cogent. The answer is that we would recommend that the Government establish an industry management board with representation from all segments of the industry, including the sports fisherman, one of the groups to which the Hon. Member alluded. If we are going to do that, as I have urged, that industrial management board must have some clout. It must be respected. The policy options that it works out must be treated seriously by the Government.

With respect to the specific problem of different user groups contesting among themselves for the resource, I would inform the House that perhaps at no time in the history of British Columbia has there been a moment when there was a better appreciation among all the user groups that the decline in stocks has to stop, that all user groups, and some more than others, would have to contribute to that decline. If this is understood by government that seeks the advice and seeks as much unanimity as it can obtain through an industry management board, then the difficult decisions and restrictions that have to be imposed will be accepted, as long as everybody knows that it is a commitment of government to bring back the fishery. Many of them can wait for a little while, but they must have hope, not that the approach of government is just to cut the catch and cut the fleet, but to seriously engage and embark upon a program of increasing the habitat capacity, increasing the entire fishery so that there will indeed be a brighter tomorrow.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the Hon. Member indicate that my question was cogent and that we all know there has to be a reduction in catch at this stage. I was