

Fishing Industry

open-pit coal mines. From my listening at public meetings and in discussions with officials in the department I have learned that we have not even begun to consider the drastic consequences for our fishing resources. As a matter of fact, just southwest of Campbell River an open-pit coal mine will be built in the headwaters to one of the major show hatcheries at Quinsam. I have never heard of such a contradiction; nevertheless, processing and an open-pit coal mine will be allowed. There really is no appreciation of what is going to happen there.

However, that is only the beginning. There will be numerous attempts to develop that coal resource as the pressure on us increases. What will happen is that coal will go in and fisheries will go out.

Another contradiction in developing those open-pit coal mines is that the department and other individuals who are developing them are trying to reassure us that the department has sufficient monitoring and enforcement capabilities to see that those coal developers follow the guidelines laid down, yet we wind up with enforcement people telling us that they do not have the person-years, the budget nor the time to deal with all the problems in the fisheries. The hon. member for Richmond-South Delta (Mr. Siddon) mentioned a \$3 million increase in the enforcement section of the budget. That will not scratch the surface when we consider the tremendous development which will be going on.

There are numerous examples. We have the Amax situation and the pending situation at Campbell River. Mining is only one aspect of it, but the situation will become very serious in the future, and we are completely unprepared to meet what I feel will be the total destruction of our fish-rearing habitat as a result.

The forest industry, the number one industry in British Columbia, has been the number one competitor for land use as between fisheries and forestry, and essentially the predominant industry under provincial control is basically eroding the available habitat for fish rearing.

In the past loggers have come in and logged out the valley bottoms where the quick, cheap timber is available. Erosion and destruction of streams for spawning and juvenile fish rearing has been total. We wind up with flooding. Once the spawning species have gone up, the soil can no longer hold moisture and when there are heavy rains, they simply flush the system out totally. If we head up through the area around Bella Coola, we find that where there once were spawning streams we now just have conduits which run water down, and there is no spawning capability.

The unregulated forest industry has gone a long way in the past toward destroying the habitat on which this resource is based. The Kimsquit Valley will be logged out. In that area chums and a variety of other species are raised. We saw what happened at Riley Creek, and until that conflict is resolved satisfactorily and until the department has the capability of enforcing habitat protection, with laws which are essentially on the books, we will not find that our habitat will be

preserved, and the resource will eventually be eroded out from underneath us.

Also with regard to the environment, as we come down the coast of British Columbia and down Vancouver Island, we find that the demand for land use in every estuary is for industrial purposes, for the dumping of municipal sewage or for land fill. Essentially we are giving up an area which is probably far more productive in its food raising capability than any farmland in British Columbia. I would point to the Comox estuary where there have been landfill projects. It was felt that the best place to build a sewage lagoon was right in the middle of that valuable productive estuary. Industries in that particular valley locate right smack in the middle of the estuary. They do not locate in other areas somewhat farther away where it might be slightly more difficult for them to develop. Every single development, every piece of landfill poured in there and every piece of sewage poured in there destroys the capability to raise fish. We are witnessing the destruction of the resource.

● (1730)

I should like to turn to the Campbell River estuary. The municipality of Campbell River appealed to the federal government for assistance in relocating industry, stopping further encroachment and trying to reverse some of the tremendous damage which has been done. We are now in the process of a new project in the Comox estuary which will dump more raw sewage. Basically we need a commitment on the part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and on the part of the provincial government of British Columbia to move quickly to preserve its extremely valuable fish rearing and food raising capabilities. But I do not see any action. I just see continuous and serious erosion in such areas along the entire coast.

Turning to the Fraser River, in the area in which I was born and raised, I had quite a shock the other day. On various occasions I have walked a good piece of that river from Mission to its mouth on both sides. I was under the impression that it was still in the state it was when I was much younger. The trip up that river in a fish boat the other day scared me, and I say that seriously. Not only is there a tremendous load and discharge of sewage, chemical wastes, poisons of all sorts and varieties into it, but there seems to be a structural change in that river designed to get rid of marshes and fishery habitat competing for land use in its estuary and, I guess, the associated fish-supporting aspects of that river. It has been mentioned before, but I should like to add my voice to it: with the destruction of that river will probably come the destruction of the fishing industry in the province of British Columbia. That river is in such a serious state right now that a parliamentary task force should be set up to study what is taking place.

The provincial government of British Columbia seems committed to asserting its constitutional authority. That is probably the only explanation we could give for some of the more bizarre aspects of its policymaking. It had the recent misfortune of one of the ministers in charge of lands coming out to my riding and stating that they were declaring a moratorium on booming grounds in Baynes Sound, an area located along