

will continue and the streams will eventually cease to be productive. Urban development land use practices and technologies must change. All streams must be protected by buffer zones. We have to stop treating the Fraser River as a storm sewer, with effluent coming from our cities right into the Fraser untreated. So many people are concerned about the river but no government has really acted effectively, and all levels of government share responsibility for the condition that the Fraser is in right now.

Our federal caucus of the New Democratic Party established a task force on the Fraser River this year. Part of the mandate of our task force has been to travel through the province to various areas along the Fraser River, and to listen to the people who live, work, recreate, and walk along the banks of the Fraser River and to get the input about their concerns about the Fraser River issues. I was pleased to host one of those meetings in my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby, and I was truly amazed at the expertise that is out there. This expertise comes from people who have been working in the environmental movement, people who have been working on the river as fishermen and fisherwomen, and people who work in the industry along the river. They all share a common thread; they are all concerned about the river and what is happening there.

Madam Speaker, what future is there for the Fraser River? What future is there for the fisheries, for the fish habitat, for controlling pollution, and for the polluters themselves?

The task force on that river that we had and the co-operation that we received from people who were only too happy and willing to share with us their views on what is happening on the Fraser River serves as a prime example for the need to co-operate to get an effective strategy.

We must concentrate on pollution abatement and cleanup. It is possible to clean up our environment. It is possible to clean up the Fraser River through tough standards. Bill C-74 is just one small step along that route. But it is an important step.

I want to urge this government to go further, and to go further with the green plan that we heard about today, so that our children and our children's children will be

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assured that when they fish on the Fraser River or on the east coast or on the seas of the Pacific, that they will be able to eat the products that they fish.

As a young child I dug for clams and oysters, and we went crabbing and collected seafood every summer off the shores of Vancouver Island. Today, many of those areas are closed to shell fish. You cannot collect the crab and shellfish there any longer.

We must make it clear to polluters through bills such as this one, through enforcement, and through the courts, that it is a serious matter. We must agree that the time for strict legislation is here. Some legislation is in place, but, unfortunately, it has not been enforced effectively.

Urban areas must also look at their impact on the Fraser River and the fisheries in general. Inland water should no longer be treated as sewers. Habitat must be protected. Fish, birds, and other forms of wildlife are entitled to our waterways. We need them. It is high time that we acknowledge that. We can no longer look at our environment in separate parts. Everything in our globe is inter-related.

Bill C-74 is an important first step for our fisheries. As my colleague, the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan has said, the increases in penalties will not help unless these penalties are actually imposed. He also noted that other acts have severe penalties. But enforcement has not gone near that amount, because the courts have treated these violations with lesser penalties. If Bill C-74 is to be worth while, there must be a strong emphasis on controlling, surveillance, and enforcement. I am concerned about this because the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is somewhat under-staffed and lacking the number of vessels to carry out proper enforcement.

If fisheries is as important to the government as it is to other Canadians, as it is to the members on this side of the House of Commons, this legislation, when passed, will be given full support.

Mr. Dingwall: Madam Speaker, I think there is a disposition in the House that the two remaining speakers, the hon. member for Labrador, who wishes to have the floor for approximately 10 minutes, and thereafter, I believe, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans who wishes to have the floor for 10 minutes as well.