

Supply

in that system must have higher escapement. We certainly know that many streams, especially small ones, lost their runs or their potential many years ago. Are these streams identified? Is there a list of them? Mr. Speaker, I doubt it.

Dr. Pearse said:

The available data is limited mainly to the large river systems, so the runs in the hundreds of small streams that account for most coho production and altogether about half of all salmon production could not be analyzed. These smaller streams are undoubtedly the most vulnerable to habitat damage.

How does anyone persuade Treasury Board to increase the Salmonid Enhancement Program funds when we do not even know the potential for small stream improvement? Furthermore, it throws into doubt the validity of the recommendations that flow from the admission that "about half of all salmon production could not be analyzed". As another example, on January 21, 1984 the Sports Fishing Advisory Board wrote to the Minister and said that the sports sector takes only 4 per cent of the net catch of salmon. That is probably true, but unless sports fishermen reading that realize that in the Strait of Georgia they take 68 per cent of the coho and 50 per cent of the chinook, and that on the entire coast they take 21 per cent of the chinook and 15 per cent of the coho, they will never understand why they too are part of the conservation and escapement equation.

A January 5, 1984 departmental working paper, to which I have referred, said that there are more than 300,000 sports fishermen. The Sports Fishing Advisory Board said there are almost 400,000, and Dr. Pearse said 320,000. I am sure there are many more examples. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that it is impossible to manage a fishery without everyone involved understanding just what the facts are. Further, if we believe, as I do, that decision-making must represent the considered views of the various user groups, it is quite impossible to obtain any kind of working consensus without a clear idea of what we know and do not know.

Assuming that we established an agreed upon data base for decision-making, what is the object of the exercise? The object is to stop the decline of stocks, rebuild and expand the stocks, and maximize the employment possibilities associated with the fishery. I do not think there is a fisherman on the coast who would disagree with that statement. Is this really the objective of the Department at the present time? Let us look at the January 5, 1984 working paper. The title, "Pacific Fisheries Policy Options: Working Paper", is instructive. The object, as set out in that paper, reads:

The purpose of this working paper is to set out the important resource, economic and policy considerations respecting Pacific fisheries policy options.

To really know what its implications are one has to examine the working paper itself. That examination is disturbing. Of the four strategic alternatives listed, commencing on page 13, there is not one single mention of habitat restoration. In fact, the word "habitat" never appears. Equally astonishing, the Salmonid Enhancement Program is never mentioned. The only approach that the Department appears to be considering is cutting the catch and reducing the fleet.

I see that my time has been interrupted by the luncheon adjournment. I would therefore call it one o'clock.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

[English]

Mr. Fraser: Mr. Speaker, before the adjournment I was speaking about the four strategic alternatives that were listed in the January 5, 1984 Government working paper. These are the strategic alternatives to what could be done to correct the dismal and very difficult situation in the West Coast fishery. I was saying that of the four strategic alternatives listed, commencing on page 13 of the working paper, there is not one single mention of habitat restoration. In fact, the word "habitat" never appears.

Equally astonishing is that the Salmonid Enhancement Program is never mentioned. The only approach that the Department appears to be considering is cutting the catch and reducing the fleet. In other words, there is absolutely no consideration being given to achieving an eventual greater number of fish as a consequence of expanding the total area of habitat necessary for growth of the fishery. Stop the decline, yes. Reduce the catching capacity, yes. But how can anyone have any hope for the future, any hope for a vibrant economically successful fishery, if Government policy does not even consider the potential for a much better fishery?

These so-called policy options do not even recognize why the Salmonid Enhancement Program was established in the first place. It was not established to keep levels of fish production constant. It was not even established to arrest declines. It was established to increase fish production. There is nothing in these policy options that begins to take into account the hundreds of small streams that account for half of our salmon production. There is nothing about rehabilitating those hundreds of streams or any others, for that matter.

● (1410)

Let us consider what should have been in the working paper. The first thing is a clear commitment to restoration of the resource and the industry. The House will note that I include both. I say this because it is our conviction that the industry is in fact of significant value to our province and to Canada. The industry consists of commercial fishermen, including native fishermen, processors and sports fishermen. Associated with the industry are many others whose incomes are dependent upon the fishing industry. There should be a clear signal to all