

Government Orders

contest in the province of B.C. in the Social Credit Party. I guess those events will unfold as they might.

Environment has always been a very key concern to British Columbians. Governments at the provincial, federal and even at the municipal level have not been keeping pace with what individuals want, what average British Columbians want, in terms of protection for our environment. We all know and understand that people are leaving government on the issue of a safe and clean environment.

Clause 10 in this bill increases the penalties for harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat caused by the carrying on of any work or undertaking. A summary conviction rises from \$5,000 to not exceeding \$300,000 with subsequent offences carrying that fine or imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both. The penalty for the first indictable offence is also increased to a fine not to exceed \$1 million or a term not over three years, or both.

We see the maximum penalties being increased, and what we want to see further is that the provisions in this act will be enforced and taken seriously. We know that we have had regulations in place in the past that have not been adhered to. The penalties have not been used to ensure correct fishing methods and sense of caring about our environment.

In the New Democratic Party we say that polluters must pay for the damage they cause, so I am pleased that the government has incorporated two amendments to Bill C-74 for this third reading.

Both of these amendments were presented by my colleague, the member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley. I want to congratulate him for his effective work in the committee and his ability to bring the amendments through to third reading. It will make this bill much more effective.

The first amendment means that the minister must table an annual report on the administration and enforcement of the provisions of the act in relation to fish habitat protection and pollution prevention. A summary of convictions under the act must be given. I only wish, Madam Speaker, that the government had listed the number of non-compliances as well as the number of convictions. We all know that convictions are one thing but there are a lot of situations on the Fraser River and other areas of Canada where there are non-compliances

that go on and on and on and people are very frustrated by this. The House is aware of this because of the actions of my colleague, the hon. member for Skeena, who has brought the matter to our attention, that many polluters have not been prosecuted.

• (1740)

The second amendment states that a convicted person must, if the court orders, pay for promoting the proper management and control of fisheries or fish habitat. Originally, fish habitat was not included in Bill C-74 and I am pleased that this oversight has also been corrected.

As I mentioned earlier, this proposed legislation has a very big impact on British Columbia as a whole and it also affects my riding of New Westminster—Burnaby. The Fraser River, which is one of the most important waterways in British Columbia, in fact one of the most important waterways in Canada, runs right through my riding. It is a river that is of historical importance. Settlements in British Columbia were, in the early days, along the Fraser and it remains a very important waterway in our province. The surrounding ecosystems, the fisheries, the fish habitat, and the marshlands are increasingly being hurt and destroyed by pollution. The salmon resource of the Fraser River is symbolic as an indicator of the well-being of that river.

Madam Speaker, the commercial fishery is the fourth largest industry in my province, with a wholesale value of over \$800 million in 1987. The recreational fisheries are worth \$186 million annually, and are an important component in B.C.'s third largest industry, which is tourism. The salmon catch makes up over 50 per cent of the commercial wholesale value of all fish products. The salmon fleet is made up of 4,500 vessels and has a shore-worker population, at peak times, of 26,000 people.

Salmon is also the basis for British Columbia's important tidal sports fisheries, worth \$86 million annually, and generating 4,000 person-years of employment. The Fraser River system produces more salmon than any other single river system in the entire world. In addition, another 29 fish species reside in the river and 87 more in the estuary.

The Fraser River produces 66 per cent of the total B.C. catch of sockeye salmon. With present development practices, a loss of salmon production in the urban areas