

needed is a Japanese boat. Japan this year licensed 25 of their vessels in Halifax to fish tuna. They had a higher bi-catch of bluefin than we had total quota on the Virgin Rocks. That is by international agreement.

Then there are special agreements. We cannot get a capelin licence. I would be arrested if I went down and fished capelin. Any member of Parliament would, any Canadian would. There is a freeze on groundfish licences in 2J, 3K, 3L and 3Ps right now. Not a person, not even a fisherman, can get a groundfish licence if he does not have one. I cannot get a capelin licence but the Soviet Union this year by this special arrangement were not only given 32,000 tonnes of capelin in 3N and 3-O off the east coast and 21,000 tonnes in 3K off the northeast coast, but they were given an additional 50,000 tonnes. That is 100,000 tonnes. That is 200 million pounds inside Canada's 200-mile zone.

Here we are today talking about increasing penalties to Canadians for bringing in fish.

Madam Speaker, I can see that you want me to sit down.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-74, an act to amend the Fisheries Act and the Criminal Code.

It was interesting to hear the previous speaker from the Liberal side make comments about one of my predecessors, the Hon. Judge Stuart Leggatt who was a distinguished member of this Chamber and was a very well-known and well-respected British Columbian. I am proud to follow after him and after Pauline Jewett in the riding of New Westminster.

Amendments to the Fisheries Act are urgently needed and long overdue. In the past, penalty and enforcement provisions were sadly lacking. Fisheries is a very important industry in my province of British Columbia and Bill C-74 is a step towards protecting fisheries in B.C., as it does increase fines for those fishing illegally or those who contaminate our fish habitat. It strengthens the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' ability to collect data and broadens the investigative powers of fisheries officers.

Government Orders

I know of the hard and somewhat frustrating work of fisheries officers in enforcement and how frustrated they have been in the past when the enforcement mechanisms have not been properly used. Several clauses in this bill do address that matter. Of what use is legislation if there is no mechanism to enforce it?

We know that toothless legislation has often been tabled by this government, so we are pleased to see that Bill C-74 does have some strength. I only hope that it will be enforced. It is not just simply a matter of policing.

The changes also help in the collection of data. We all know that effective data is very necessary in the management of our fishing resources. This bill will improve data collection. We will have better records of the species of fish that are caught. They must now be given to a fisheries officer on request.

We are entering a new era with a different approach. Canadians want to approach our environment in a responsible manner. The people who make their livelihood from our seas and rivers are no exception. They have often been at the forefront in demanding effective environmental controls, because they know that without them the resources will not be there for future workers, and in fact, for themselves.

They also understand that the collection of data is important. Unfortunately, for many of the people who work on the seas and rivers this will be somewhat of an additional burden. We know that the fishing industry has been under a heavy burden lately.

There have been trade disputes that have been decided in favour of the U.S. There has been overfishing, as was so dramatically mentioned a few minutes ago. There have been cuts to the unemployment insurance program that have had a detrimental effect on those in the fishing industry. The additional cost may be a significant factor for some of the small fishermen.

My main interests are the clauses that affect protection of fisheries and the environment. This has been of special interest in my own province of British Columbia. Earlier this week we saw the Social Credit minister of the environment resign because he did not have the support of the premier in British Columbia to bring in controls over the pulp industry which is one of the main polluters of the rivers in B.C. Many of us wonder if this is the first statement in the opening of another leadership