

provide float plane access. That is an absolute must. That is a glaring omission by this Government.

In my riding alone, Mr. Speaker, there are between 6,000 and 8,000 native people. Their sole income depends upon access to the fishing industry. The people from Bella Coola have called to the attention of the Department of Fisheries that its fishery management plans are under serious question. I would like to comment how in one particular case this is causing an enormous problem. In Rivers Inlet the Department of Fisheries advocated an escapement of 800,000 sockeye salmon. However, in the same Rivers Inlet, the Owikeno Lake area, it is allowing the logging companies to go out and strip the river valleys and the spawning areas and refuse to attempt an integrated resource management study. And it is not just Rivers Inlet, it is the Kimsquit and the Nimpkish system. In system after system they are failing to provide integrated resource management studies and plans and at the same time saying, "Well, we need to keep the stocks up and therefore we are going to have to increase the escapement". Therefore, we are in a cycle of destruction here. We are destroying the habitat in which spawning occurs. We cannot produce enough spawners to go into those areas and recover when the flooding begins to wash out the spawn and destroy the run, no matter how many sockeye salmon go in there. Ultimately, communities are destroyed all up and down the coast. Native people need access to that fishing resource. They need access to the management plan and a fair catch.

That improvement loan should be provided to native communities not only for vessels to catch the fish. Communities should be encouraged to become involved in processing so they can balance the economy and give some strength and depth to their economic base. Ultimately, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the West Coast of British Columbia—and I hope the Parliamentary Secretary would be in a position to press this point home, along with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan)—must get involved in an affirmative action program whereby native people would be hired by the Department eventually to go back into their communities with some expertise and create some understanding and dialogue between those communities and the Department. It is imperative that that Department, which has a very large representation of native people in the industry, begin an affirmative action plan which puts native people to work in the Department.

The Fisheries Improvement Loans Act should also be targeted to the shellfish industry. There are very few areas on the coast of British Columbia in which shellfish can be effectively developed. Okeover Inlet, Jervis Inlet, and places like that, are excellent areas. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans must allocate staff resources to move quickly to get development going in the shellfish industry in that area. The enormous red tape must be cut. Expertise and assistance must be provided, as well as financial assistance, so we can at least protect those areas. If we do not move very soon, Mr. Speaker, those areas will be subject to other competitive uses, such as mining, as in the case of Okeover Inlet, or recreational land use, and those areas will be ultimately polluted as is Boundary Bay and Ladysmith Harbour. Some of the finest shellfish areas on the coast of British Columbia have been lost because

of pollution. Unless the Department of Fisheries and Oceans moves quickly, the ones which are left will be lost also.

With respect to the Unemployment Insurance Act, what point is there in lending a fisherman money to build a bigger boat if he cannot fish? As more and more of the fishing opportunities are closed down because you have bigger boats chasing fewer fish and a management plan which is beginning to fail, unemployment insurance for these fishermen becomes absolutely necessary in order to put food on the table for their families. What we have is an unemployment insurance régime in this country which discriminates against fishermen the way it does against no other occupational group.

We had a situation in this House not too long ago in which we debated the issue of fishing. I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that there were fishermen in the communities of my riding who waited up to 12 weeks before they were able to get their claims processed. They were on welfare. Trying to collect welfare took them six weeks. There is a desperate need to improve the administration of the unemployment insurance system. There is a desperate need to provide some equity in unemployment insurance benefits so that fishermen who fish in the winter can claim in the period when they are normally disqualified, and the same for individuals who injure themselves or are in ill health. There is tremendous discrimination. It has often been said that that is the only group which is self-employed which has access to unemployment insurance benefits. However, I assure you, Mr. Speaker, there are strong indications there that we need improvements and we need them soon. Thank you.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I have just a very quick comment to make. I would like to assure both hon. gentlemen that their comments have been listened to with great interest. It is my own view, and I am sure the view of the officials of the Department of Fisheries, some of whom are listening now, that very constructive advice has been given. We shall attempt to recognize that which has been constructive and to make whatever improvements can be made in future when Bills of this sort come before the House.

I would simply like to emphasize again to the Hon. Members the Minister's appreciation for allowing this Bill to go through three stages today. Without this authority, the Act would expire effective July 1 and loans could not be made. It is particularly important in the case of British Columbia where 70 per cent of all of the loans go.

It would be of interest to the Hon. Member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall), that in the case of the Maritime Provinces, provincial Governments do provide loan board. In the case of British Columbia this is the only means available. I thank hon. gentlemen opposite for allowing this Bill to go through today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it the wish of the House to adopt the motion?