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Fishery Officers Abandoned by Bureaucrats

OTTAWA– Intimidated by the Cheam Band, the top brass in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has decided not to lay charges against Sid Douglas and other Cheam Band members who attacked Fishery Officers when they interrupted their illegal fishing.

“This a clear signal that it is OK for Sid Douglas and Cheam Band to defy and threaten Fishery Officers,” said Cummins. “Unfortunately it is also a clear signal to Fishery Officers that they will not be supported if they attempt to prevent illegal fishing by Cheam Band members.”

On May 13th of this year three enforcement officers approached Cheam band members fishing illegally on the Fraser River during a closed time. Sid Douglas was arrested by the officers for threatening them. The officers were prevented from leaving with Douglas. As part of the negotiations for the release of the officers, authorities released Douglas.

The Department’s response to the holding of the Fishery Officers and the threats against them was to suspend the officers who had been held hostage, to agree not to confront illegal fishing by Cheam Band members and to announce that it would postpone the laying of charges until the end of the fishing season.

Cheam band members fished illegally throughout the summer.

Now that the fishing season is complete the department has confirmed that no charges will be laid against Sid Douglas who had been arrested by the officers, or the Cheam band members who fished illegally, threatened and held the officers hostage.

“At DFO there are two laws, one for the Cheam and one for everyone else,”

“For the Cheam, threats and intimidation have paid off big time,” Cummins concluded. “For DFO bureaucrats, the protection of salmon has again taken second place to toadying up to thugs.”

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