

recently spoken through the chairman of the advisory committee pleading that Bill C-211 not be adopted.

As my colleague, the Hon. Member for Selkirk—Interlake (Mr. Holtmann), said in this House on October 1: "Fishermen tell me they are getting quite a good run for their product and I think the facts bear that out".

Adopting Bill C-211 is not a simple change. The Bill would, in essence, unilaterally kill the corporation as it now exists. It would do so against the wishes of several parties, including the provinces. I would want to add my voice to those facts and to the wishes of so many others and say that it is probably better to improve the FFMC than to pass this legislation at this point in time. If we wish to change and improve the FFMC, we should look at internal changes which can accommodate the needs of fishermen from the Northwest Territories.

I would urge the Government to work with the Hon. Member to make those kinds of internal changes to the organization, in consultation with the FFMC, and I think we will find that the end results will be much better for the Government. In conclusion, I have to say that I will not be supporting this Bill.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to stand and speak on Bill C-211. A year and a half or two years ago, I had the opportunity to visit the riding of the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) and the communities on both sides of Great Slave Lake. There is no question about it when the Hon. Member for Western Arctic says there is not total happiness and unanimity with respect to the value or otherwise of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. One can find that sentiment quite readily on both sides of Great Slave Lake, particularly on the lower side. There is no doubt about that at all.

Despite the sentiment that there were problems with the FFMC, I am not sure there is a unanimous view that it ought to be wiped out of existence. Having said that, let me say that I was very interested to hear the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Binns) speak because I was not quite sure at all what the Government's position on the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation was going to be. In fact, if I were a betting man, and I am not, I would have bet a substantial amount of money that when the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, as he is wont to do, stood in his place to speak on behalf of his Minister, he would not have been urging those of us in the House who are interested in this matter to vote against the Bill which was prepared and supported by the Member for Western Arctic, namely Bill C-211, which would wipe out the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. I thought he was going to stand and encourage all of us to join him and his Minister in putting the thumb on the spread of communism in this country just as fast as we could.

Freshwater Fish Marketing Act

Why would I say communism, Mr. Speaker? Because I did some homework. I went back to a speech given by the Hon. Member for Richmond—South Delta (Mr. Siddon), the same Member who is now the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, to see what his views were on this Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. The Minister's Parliamentary Secretary spoke on his behalf, giving his view that this is a useful, helpful and dynamic organization, that it might need some slight changes and tinkering but it is a good organization. This same Minister, speaking in his place in this House as a member of the Opposition, and a lowly back-bencher at that, said, with respect to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation in 1980

I suggest what we have now is a system of monopolistic dominance in the fish marketing industry, in the prairie provinces in particular, which is a far cry from what I understand to be the principle of democratic socialism where free enterprise and the private sector can operate in competition with one another. What we have is virtual communism in all of its forms in the example and illustration of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

• (1710)

He went on to state, "I say it is the beginnings of communism in this country because it takes away from the individual the right to compete". Those were the words of the Hon. Member for Richmond—South Delta before he was the Minister of Fisheries and Ocean, and nothing but a lowly Conservative back-bencher.

I thought the Hon. Member for Richmond—South Delta was seeing red then when he made those ridiculous comments that a Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation was the symbol of growing communism in the country. The only joy I can take out of this futile debate today, once again about this Bill, is that, obviously, having heard from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in the intervening nearly eight years since the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans gave this speech in which he described the Freshwater Fishing Marketing Corporation as communism he has seen the light and come to his senses, and that the spirit of *perestroika* has invaded his soul. Now he wants to give the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation a chance to survive, notwithstanding the heavy hand of the Hon. Member for Western Arctic who wants to put an end to this corporation.

You can well understand, Mr. Speaker, being a long-standing Member of this House who is held in high regard by all Members from all corners and all Parties, and with a good sense of the ridiculous, that I could not help but note that speech given by the Minister who called it communism eight years ago and who now so stoutly defends the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. May I say, it is an interesting conversion on the road to Ottawa to the Cabinet, to 24 Sussex, or the Governor General's residence.

In conclusion, I wish to read a copy of a letter dated November 23, 1987 to the Minister of Fisheries, the Hon. Member for Richmond—South Delta. It was written by Maurice Blanchard, Chairman, Fishermen's Advisory Committee, regarding Bill C-211. I wish to quote a couple of excerpts. Mr. Blanchard states: