

Freshwater Fish Marketing Report

facetious, for our fishermen have been co-operating with the packers and shippers for many years. They have assisted them in handling the catch. I think it would be a distinct loss to the president and the directors of this new marketing corporation if the skill and expertise of these men were lost to the board. After all, these are the people who will be primarily affected if the marketing corporation is not as successful as we hope it will be. Surely it is not asking too much that they be given some say in the control and management of their own affairs.

Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley):

Mr. Speaker, in regard to this amendment I think a more logical case could be made for representation of the fishermen on the committee than in the case of the last amendment, with regard to which the government could argue that, after all, there had to be some expertise, some commercial know-how, people with degrees, to do a proper job. Surely it can be legitimately said that those who are actually engaged in the industry should be allowed to have their say on the advisory committee. If the government picks the membership of the board, the board could well turn down any advice given to it by those involved in the fishing industry itself.

The attitude taken by government speakers in relation to the last amendment tempts me to believe that they think that the government knows best, even in fishing matters. I have the feeling that big brother is watching them, that big brother is telling them what to do, and this is why they are treating the fishermen in this fashion. We all know that our farmers have suffered somewhat from the misadventures of government boards, and I cannot help but feel that those boards would have avoided making many of their mistakes had they listened to the farmers' advice. If we had sought advice from the farmers we would not now face the present mess in Vancouver in respect of grain sales.

● (2:20 p.m.)

In the field we are now considering advice ought to be sought from those who have practical experience. You can have all the degrees you want, you can know a great deal about many subjects, but it is better for you to be qualified in some practical aspect of the fishing industry—notice, Mr. Speaker, that I said “qualified”—before being appointed to the board. The minister and the government ought to give active fishermen the right to be on the board. Those fishermen ought to be

[Mr. Crouse.]

able to express the desires, feelings and wishes of fishermen in general about the sale of their products, which will be the concern of this government marketing board.

Mr. Mac T. McCutcheon (Lambton-Kent):

Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the debate and the minister's replies to the remarks of hon. members who have proposed various amendments. I find it difficult to understand why the government is reticent to accept this amendment. The minister said it is very likely that there will be fishermen on the board and it is very likely that the Auditor General will audit the books of the board. That means nothing; that is a general statement of the minister. I should prefer to see enshrined in this legislation the right of fishermen to be members of the board.

I return once more to a thought I expressed when this measure was first introduced. Is this just another welfare state social measure or is the government setting up a true marketing board? If it is to be a true marketing board, why are people with practical experience not to be included on it? How many other marketing boards dealing with other commodities exclude from their membership those who have had practical experience? If this is to be a straight, out and out social welfare scheme, then let us follow up our thinking by appointing to the board academics with no practical knowledge of fishing. If it is to be a true marketing board, then I wish to see enshrined in the legislation the right of those with practical fishing experience to be on it.

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich):

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate why the hon. member moved the amendment and I wish to congratulate him for taking considerable interest in the fishing industry. I think that the remarks of hon. members, both before and after lunch, indicate that we need in the legislation specific provision for fishermen or representatives of fishermen actually engaged in the catching of fish to be on the advisory committee. This morning I spoke of the need for members of the board itself to be experts in marketing; my remarks now pertain to the advisory committee, which is not quite the same as the main board.

I am glad to see that the hon. member who moved the amendment has returned to the house. Would he accept a subamendment? My subamendment would insert after the word “be” in the clause “shall be actively engaged in the fresh-water fishing industry as fishermen” the words “persons or representatives