

As of June 16, 1976, the CBC had applied to the CRTC for 156 radio and television projects across this country. Of these, 103 have been approved and 40 are now on air.

With respect to the hon. member's constituency I would refer him, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the letters dated June 18 and March 29 which he presumably received from the Corporation and which indicated that the CBC expected to submit applications to the CRTC in late 1976 for those projects in his riding. It will be noted that this is a slight improvement over the time of application of early 1977 as was first indicated in a letter to the hon. member on November 20, 1975.

I should also like to say that I will bring the capabilities of the fishermen in the hon. member's constituency to the attention of the CBC. I am sure they will be interested.

FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING CORPORATION—ALLEGED  
FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH PROVISIONS OF ACT—  
GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, I regret two things. First, I regret I should find it necessary to be here tonight. This is the third time this session on which I have had occasion to speak of matters relating to inland fisheries and the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. I regret, too, that this is the third occasion on which the Minister of State for Fisheries (Mr. LeBlanc) has not been present in the House to articulate his stand with reference to the matters I raised during the question period. I am making no reflection on the parliamentary secretary but he is no substitute for the minister, who ought to be a fully-fledged minister to begin with. But in whatever state we find the minister of fisheries, he ought to be here. I hope the parliamentary secretary will take my words tonight and underline them and convey them to his minister tomorrow, because the next time I do battle in this Chamber I expect to do battle with the minister, not with his lieutenant, good as that lieutenant may be.

My question to the minister was this:

Mr. Speaker, my question . . . has to do with the matter I have brought to his attention on several occasions in this House. It has to do with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act, Part III, section 23(2). Could the minister now tell the House whether he has consulted the Solicitor General and whether the Solicitor General will proceed with charges because of the obvious violation of the law with reference to that section of the act?

This was the minister's non-answer:

Mr. Speaker, I will have to look into the file to see what point this matter has reached.

After months and months of evasion he is finally going to look into the file. He did that. He did not offer a satisfactory explanation though, because again I had to raise the question. On June 14, as reported in *Hansard* at page 14452, in answer to a similar question, the minister stated:

Mr. Speaker, I have consulted the legal advisors of the Fisheries and Marine Service, and their answer leads me to believe that the hon. member is either misinformed or is trying to distort the function of the corporation.

In all my dealings in this House I have never attributed to the minister anything but the most honourable inten-

tion, yet here the Minister of State for Fisheries is accusing me of intending to distort the functions of the corporation.

● (2220)

I wish to state in this House that I have neither publicly nor in this Chamber ever intended to distort what are the functions of the corporation. I wish to point out to the parliamentary secretary, in the absence of the minister, that the original concept of the agreement that was signed on June 4, 1969, was that the purpose of the corporation was to establish a single desk marketing agency for the purpose of selling freshwater fish. That is all I have ever said was its function. Is that the distortion of the purposes of the corporation to which the minister refers?

I have on numerous occasions asked the minister to initiate a cost-price analysis by species per pound of the cost of processing by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. The parliamentary secretary has assured me privately that this will happen. There were to be great plans. He was going to call a special meeting of the fisheries committee of this House and direct the officials of the corporation to attend to answer any and all questions put to them by myself or the representatives of the Lake Winnipeg Fishermen's Association or any other association that wanted to be represented.

I got home that night elated, Mr. Speaker. I phoned the fishermen in Manitoba, and they said it was great news. It was great news because, let me emphasize, that the money of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation is fishermen's money, not tax money. The corporation runs and functions as a co-operative. Any capital investment and interest on original capital investment are fishermen's money, not tax money, not government money. Surely the fishermen have a right to know what it costs to process fish. Is that the distortion to which the minister refers? I want the parliamentary secretary to stand in his place tonight and to tell me whether or not that promise of a special committee will be carried out, when, and what will be the terms of reference. I have not heard one peep from the minister yet in this regard.

Lastly, section 23(2) in Part III of the act passed by this House of Commons in 1969 clearly provides—and there is no difference of opinion among the legal advisers—that the price offered by the corporation to the fishermen must be decided on by the fishermen, in agreement with them. It is not to be decided dictatorially by the corporation; there has to be agreement with the fishermen as to price.

I ask this question of the minister: will he direct the corporation to follow the law? Is this what the minister means by saying I am distorting the purposes of the corporation or I am distorting the law? The law is clear. Will the minister or will he not direct the corporation to adhere to the laws of the land as passed by the House of Commons?

In conclusion, if I have inadvertently or otherwise attempted to distort either the function of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation or any of its activities, either collectively on the part of the corporation, or individually on the part of any officer thereof, I stand corrected and I apologize to all concerned, and I stand to learn. But if after close analysis it is found that I have not distorted the function, then I demand from the minister, or from his