

*Freshwater Fish Marketing Act*

Opposition said he would not participate because Quebec was not participating. I think we should look at the speech by the Leader of the Opposition before allowing this kind of statement.

● (1600)

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I will look at the "blues" next week.

[Translation]

**Mr. Rossi:** The House is being misled, perhaps not deliberately, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think that is the case, considering the Hon. Member.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Valcourt) will have the floor when debate resumes on this particular piece of legislation.

[Translation]

It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's *Order Paper*.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Is there unanimous consent for the House to proceed to Item No. 193?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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## FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING ACT

### MEASURE TO AMEND

**Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic)** moved that Bill C-235, an Act to amend the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

He said: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-235 has as its objective the removal of the monopoly on the sale of freshwater fish which is presently enjoyed by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation in much of western and northern Canada. I want to emphasize that it is not an attempt to remove the FFMC. I have spoken on this subject before on many occasions and people have criticized the idea because they think that it will remove the FFMC, that plants will close down and that there will be nothing to replace them in certain areas. That is not the

intent of the Bill. FFMC would continue to exist as long as it could in a competitive market-place.

As well as making some small amendments, we want to repeal Part III of the Act which gives to the FFMC a complete monopoly on the sale of most species of freshwater fish. That part also contains penalty clauses. Canadian citizens who commit the heinous crime of selling fish to someone other than the Crown corporation can be fined or sent to jail. Can we imagine Canadian citizens being sent to jail for selling fish to someone other than the federal Government agency?

I have spoken on this matter for 10 years, in many fora. I have spoken about it in the House of Commons on many occasions and previously as a Member of the Legislature. I have waxed eloquent on many occasions. I have been forceful. I have cajoled and threatened. I have been reasonable and logical. I have tried every knack of argument in debate which I know. It seems that after 15 years, we are making some headway. Today I will be rather cool, calm and collected, because I suspect that there is a certain amount of agreement among the Parties. I will even be nice to my socialist friends. I suspect they might help me, just this once. I want to retain the goodwill of the other Parties at least until five o'clock.

The other Parties may disagree with what I see as a resolution to a very difficult question which faces the freshwater industry. They should realize that the FFMC has not been particularly successful and that fishermen are not obtaining a fair return for the amount of effort which they put into the business in which they are engaged.

Marketing, in my opinion, in the opinion of many Members of the House, and certainly the people who are engaged in the fishery, has not been performed efficiently and effectively. That problem is not restricted to the freshwater section of the industry, it also affects the salt water fishery on the East Coast and on the West Coast.

I would like to compliment Senator Jack Marshall, of the other place, and his committee. That committee is engaged in an over-all study of fish marketing throughout Canada. I hope the committee will be able to present to the Senate, and to Canadian people in general, valid recommendations as to how we might improve the fishery within Canada. The committee is looking at FFMC and its practices. Of course, that will be only a very small part of the over-all effort. The committee is concerned with matters which have a national priority and importance on the East and West Coasts.

In my opinion the FFMC is a social experiment which has failed. In the Northwest Territories—and I believe the situation is very similar in the prairie provinces—before FFMC got into the business with its monopoly, there was a very active and viable fishery. The fishermen were not rich, but at least they were working and could make a decent living. After several years of government monopoly, the industry lives and relies on government subsidies and hand-outs. The provincial and territorial Governments have been obliged to subsidize a federal Crown corporation. Evidently, there is something very wrong in that situation. If the provincial and territorial subsidies were removed, the industry would fail completely. It