

and variety of products, speed of delivery, degree to which service is suited to clients, flexibility in transport and terms of payment.

Within its region, the single-desk selling operation can regulate prices to fishermen (within market limits) without threat of competitive counter action, thus securing the local market. Outside its region, the operation can mobilize the resources required to enable it to seek out markets. Also, given the amounts of product it can market at any one time, single-desk selling can theoretically secure better returns for the portions of sales it makes in the outlying markets. Thus, as in the case of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC), a single-desk selling operation can be very successful given a product line of fair market acceptance.

As the FFMC competes with the Ontario producers in domestic and export markets, sporadic complaints of unfair competition arise. Single-desk selling also engenders grievances from within its own territory about its policies, prices or other aspects of its operations. As such, it is often a target of diverse complaints from fishermen and some fish traders.

1.2 The Limits of Comparison

Although, an appreciation of the differences between the structures and organizations of the Western and the Ontario regions is useful, these fisheries are in fact difficult to compare as each is a system unto itself, subject to distinctly different socio-economic, resource and geographic factors.

Comparisons between elements of regional fisheries are difficult at the best of times because of the wide variety of species, and the diversity of equipment and techniques used by the large number of fishermen involved. Although the conditions affecting the freshwater fisheries of the Ontario and the Western regions are less extreme than those characterizing Canada's coastal fisheries, the problems of comparison are still substantial.

Ideally, a rational economic analysis could, however, compare the two systems. In the words of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Honourable Tom Siddon, at his appearance before the Committee:

We have two parallel regimes here. We should do some economic comparisons. I would be very pleased to receive an analysis of the relative prices paid to fishermen for perch and other fish caught in the Great Lakes, on the one hand, compared with the price fishermen in northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba are paid by the FFMC. I would like to have a comparison of the benefit by way of prices to fishermen against the cost, in each case, and a measure of the stability of earnings in each case in order to decide which system works best.⁽¹⁾

Recognizing the usefulness of such an exercise, the Committee recommends that:

- (1) The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in co-operation with the relevant provincial and territorial governments, undertake an economic comparison of the freshwater fisheries of the Ontario and Western Regions.**

⁽¹⁾ Canada, the Senate, Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries, Issue No. 35, May 15, 1986, p. 33.