

which handles the product from the lakeside all the way to the consumer, whether the consumer be in the fish buying markets of New York state or Poland.

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. Complete monopoly powers are reflected in part III of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act to buy, sell, trade and engage in all handling of fish caught in freshwater areas of Canada. This monopolistic corporation comes complete with its mandarins and represents a significant drain on the public purse.

Why all the concern about the corporation? First, it is well known that by taking over all the small plants in northern Canada, particularly in the northern areas of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the territories, the small community native-run fish processing operations have been eliminated. Family employment has been taken away from those communities. The spouses of the fisherpersons, to use that term, and the children that were once involved in a community effort in the processing and sale of fish, no longer have employment. The fishermen catch the fish, it is loaded on trucks, packed in ice and sent to Winnipeg, by and large, where it is processed in a very impressive new fish processing plant, built to some extent with the generosity of the taxpayers of Canada to process and store fish for sale in the export market.

One of the concerns that is well known is that local community centred fish processing operations have been destroyed. Second, it is well known that the advent of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation has led to the gradual erosion of the Co-operative Fisheries Limited, a co-operative in Saskatchewan which was a government-managed co-operative in the sense of the traditional co-operatives of Saskatchewan. It is a co-operative which reflects the movement of co-operativism which has flourished in Saskatchewan over several decades. I commend that type of involvement in the marketing and consolidation of products such as fish. That co-operative effort has been destroyed by this monolithic, monopolistic corporation managed out of Ottawa.

It is also well known to some of the fisherpersons and communities in the north that the trucking of their catch to Winnipeg, Transcona in particular, is very annoying. Furthermore, fishermen in local parts of Canada, whether they be in Edmonton, Saskatoon, Lac La Ronge or Hay River, are not allowed under the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation Act to sell directly to consumers. They are not allowed to sell directly to the public or to local supermarkets or fish markets. The corporation takes the product to Manitoba, packs it in nice boxes and sends it back to convenient Safeway stores somewhere in northern Manitoba where the price is roughly double the price paid to the fishermen. They cannot understand why they cannot sell directly in these regional areas.

Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation

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This leads to a fallacy in respect of the principal reason for which the FFMC was established. It is often contended that in the interests of orderly marketing and eliminating the so-called illicit buyers of fish who once operated in these regions, big brother government must step in to secure an increase in prices paid to fishermen. So the corporation, in its most recent annual report covering the year 1978-79, tells us that the price paid to fishermen now represents 62 per cent of the sales dollar. But if we look further into the report we find that in fact the amount paid to fishermen came to \$17 million last year out of a total sales volume worth \$34 million. In other words, the percentage paid to fishermen amounts only to 50 per cent, not to 62 per cent. So there is obviously a misleading reference in the annual report to a 62 per cent return to fishermen. Such a return is non-existent.

What the corporation does is deduct the cost of transporting the fish to Transcona along with the cost of processing and storing it there; it does not concede that these were legitimate costs incurred by the private operators which it replaced. Nor will the corporation admit that when the private operators returned about 48 per cent to 50 per cent of the sales value of the commodity to the fishermen the situation was virtually the same as it is now. If one deducts transportation costs and costs of processing and storage at Transcona, as the corporation does, the fishermen still only get 50 per cent of the sales value of their product. Nothing has changed.

Perhaps I should not say nothing has changed, Mr. Speaker; there is an illusion of higher prices. There is an illusion of price stability. No competition is allowed from the private sector. Private entrepreneurial instincts in the freshwater area are suppressed. Private companies have been forced into bankruptcy—they are not even allowed to pursue the marketing of special products and underutilized species in which the corporation is not interested. This is particularly annoying to people who believe in the free right to do business in this country without government intervention.

Of course, as a result of this federal monopoly there is a yardstick by which to determine whether the fisherman is getting fair value for his product. In the absence of private sector competition how do we know that fishermen are getting the right price? The government says, "Trust us". And now we see this fallacy which is regularly used as a governing principle by some individuals, namely, that the government can always do it better, that the be all and end all of the fish marketing industry is orderly marketing and so-called single desk selling. This is an attitude one often finds, especially in government circles and it is reflective of the big brother era which we are rapidly approaching. I believe the present minister, who is not in his place this afternoon, has a similar philosophy. I say it is the beginnings of communism in this country because it takes away from the individual the right to compete.

Also, in this case, the chairman of the board of the corporation, a political appointee who has close relationship with the cabinet and the government, is engaged in the day to day management of the corporation. He is a political sales agent