

had been done and unemployment in my riding soared to over 9 per cent. It is really little wonder that my friends to the right did so poorly in Manitoba during the last election; they were faced with the problem not only of defending the policies of their own government but also the policies of acute, protracted restraint that have been mercilessly practised by the Tory government in Manitoba.

I would like to return more specifically to the motion before the House calling for documents concerning the future of the FFMC, such as correspondence between the federal, provincial and territorial governments to be laid before the House. I am of the opinion that this is a worth-while motion, not so much because it will show grave reservations on the part of the partners in the FFMC about its operation, but because such tabling of documents will undoubtedly show widespread and general satisfaction with the performance of the corporation. The information that I have would indicate that there is now general agreement among the participating agencies, after a thorough review of the possible options, that the corporation is functioning reasonably well and that only fine tuning adjustments were necessary.

I would point out that even the province of Manitoba, which was championing the cause of privatization that is so dear to the hearts of my associates to the right, has now come around to a position virtually in support of the status quo. Hon. members may well be asking themselves how a government like the Lyon Progressive Conservative government, the very epitome of neo-Conservatism, could come to the conclusion that the FFMC was not so bad after all. It is like this; in October the government sent up a trial balloon suggesting privatization or competition with the FFMC, but in the months since then they have been surprised to learn that fishermen in Manitoba do not want to see the government make such changes. In fact for the most part fishermen felt that the FFMC was working in their favour and should not be radically tampered with. The power of public opinion is sometimes awesome, and in this case it was powerful enough to change the opinion of a government of the like of the one that now, temporarily, occupies the corridors of power in Winnipeg.

The government of Saskatchewan also had some concerns regarding the operation of FFMC. But they were not concerns about the fundamental principle that the corporation represented. They were, instead, concerns with over-centralization of processing to the detriment of smaller processors in their provinces. However, I believe it can be safely said that some of Saskatchewan's concerns have now been ameliorated.

I believe that the principle of orderly marketing of freshwater fish for which the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation stands is important to the continued viability of the freshwater fishing industry in Manitoba and the other provinces involved. Orderly marketing protects the fishermen from the erratic behaviour of the free market, and in so doing ensures them a stable income. Of course, even orderly marketing cannot protect fishermen from ridiculous licensing practices on the part of a provincial government, nor can it protect them against the ravages of biological transfers that could occur should our

country be unable to halt the progress of the Garrison diversion in North Dakota.

I have no doubt that the FFMC has made a large, very positive difference in the lives of freshwater fishermen in Canada. While there were definitely some bumpy years and, I think, some bad decision-making by corporation management, I have no doubt that the FFMC is now well on line. I would strongly oppose any moves made to change its set-up fundamentally and so, too, would a vast majority of fishermen.

There is some room for change and for improvement, but there is absolutely no room to allow the dismantling of the FFMC. To return to the pre-1969 system would be to religate thousands of freshwater fishermen to a poorer quality of life.

Let me give one illustration. During the campaign I visited Matheson Island, an island fishing community on Lake Winnipeg. I remarked to the person showing me around on the number of very handsome large, new houses owned by the fishermen. Without hesitation he told me that these houses had all been built since the FFMC had been set up. Further down the island he pointed out some small, very run-down shacks. These were the houses that had been owned by the fishing companies and which the fishermen had lived in before the establishment of the marketing board. Fortunately, no one is forced to live in such buildings any more.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

[Translation]

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Madam Speaker with the House went up to the Senate Chamber.

● (1810)

And being returned:

Madam Speaker informed the House that the Deputy Governor General had been pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

Bill C-39, an act to amend the Bank Act and the Quebec Savings Banks Act—Chapter 12.

Bill C-19, an act to amend the Employment Tax Credit Act—Chapter 13.

Bill C-35, an act to amend the Regional Development Incentives Act—Chapter 14.

Bill C-7, an act to amend the Saltfish Act—Chapter 15.

Bill C-15, an act to amend the Livestock Feed Assistance Act—Chapter 16.

Bill C-22, an act to adjust the Accounts of Canada and to make related amendments to certain Acts—Chapter 17.