

Waterfront Whiffs

Dissatisfied With Pay, Fishery Patrol Men to Quit—Final Date For Halibut Season Closing.

Unless their pay checks for July come up to what they have agreed to demand, crews of fishery patrol boats in Prince Rupert area will quit their jobs as a body, it was stated yesterday afternoon by Robert Frizzell, spokesman on their behalf. Frizzell said that some fifty to sixty such employees were involved in the walk-out agreement.

He said that checks were today running \$27 per month less than last year and, despite repeated representations seeking that the cut at least be restored and promises of redress by departmental officials, nothing had been done and the checks were still coming in at the lower figure. During the war there had been a bonus for the fishery patrol men but this has since been discontinued. Skipperers are now receiving \$142 a month and engineers, \$138. They are subject to 24-hour call and there is no overtime provision, says Frizzell, adding: "We have been underpaid for years. We

might as well quit and take other jobs."

Skipper Robert E. Bennett, who cleared his 29-foot motor-sailer "Gone Again" for Ketchikan yesterday afternoon, began sailing the Pacific coast waters at the age of 13 when he built a 17-foot sailboat and cruised the waters of Puget Sound. Since then much of Robert Bennett's time has been spent afloat on the salt water. His interest and knowledge in navigation and his familiarity with Puget Sound earned him a skipper's berth aboard a Coast Guard patrol boat during the Second World War. The "Gone Again," whose home port

is Oak Harbor on Whidby Island, 90 miles north of Seattle, carries a crew of two, made up of the skipper's wife and Mr. Dorward. The "Gone Again" left its home waters early in July and made a leisurely passage up the coast calling at Sidney, Nanaimo, and Bella Bella. Skipper Bennett said the trip had been splendid so far. Fine weather has accompanied them all the way and they have been accorded excellent treatment wherever they have had occasion to call. After a short visit in Ketchikan, the "Gone Again" will return to Prince Rupert enroute home. On the way back Skipper Bennett said they would take almost a month to explore the B.C. coast and possibly try their hand at salmon fishing in these waters.

HEAVIEST PENALTY YET HANDED OUT

The heaviest penalty ever levied against a halibut skipper

for infraction of the International Fishery Commission Regulation was handed out to Olaf Anderson, master of the halibut boat Miss Margot, by Magistrate W. D. Vance in police court Friday when he was fined \$800 plus confiscation of 12,000 pounds of halibut caught under a black-cod license. The case was the third halibut fishery prosecution on the west coast this season and followed closely the conviction of Capt. Emil Petersen of the Clipper II, who was fined \$300 by the same magistrate on a charge of fishing halibut in Area Two under an Area Three clearance. The Clipper II's catch of 9,000 pounds also was confiscated. The Miss Margot was apprehended off Langara island by Capt. C. W. Earnshaw of the fisheries patrol vessel Kitimaat on Wednesday. It is said to be the first case in which a vessel was actually caught at sea in violation of the regulations. The fine handed down by the magistrate is also said to be the biggest ever levied in such a case.

In the case of the Clipper II, Capt. Petersen was fined for fishing halibut in Area Two, which is now closed to halibut fishing, while under clearance to fish in Area Three. This case, which immediately preceded the prosecution of Capt. Anderson, was the second this season. The first occurred at Victoria where an American vessel was caught in Canadian waters.

Maximum penalties provided by the regulations for infractions are \$1,000 fine or 12 months in jail, plus confiscation of the vessel and equipment.

Announcement on Thursday of the closing of halibut Area Three on August 17 sets the date for the termination of the shortest halibut season on record. Since the opening of the season on May 1, 109 days will have elapsed when it closes. This means that the season's quota for both areas, about 53,000,000 pounds, is being caught each year in a shorter and shorter period, and poses the problem for fishermen of finding employment for their boats during the rest of the year. Last year Area Three closed two days later—August 19. In the early days when the season extended the year-round, or even later when it lasted from March to November, halibut men and vessels were kept occupied, profitably or otherwise, at the one type of fishery for the greater portion of the year. Now, however, it has changed. Halibut men are either faced with the problem of tying their boats up for nine months a year, or going trolling, black codding or perhaps, tuna fishing. With the price of black cod and the uncertainty of tuna fishing, it is quite a problem.

Since the Area Three halibut started to be delivered shortly after the middle of June, landings have been fairly regular, ranging between 100,000 and 250,000 pounds daily. There have, however, been some days when there were no arrivals. During the last five weeks, halibut landings from Area Three has totalled 3,322,000 pounds. This is more than a million pounds greater than landings at the same date from Area Three in 1946.

Bulk of the Prince Rupert landings have been from the Prince Rupert and Vancouver boats which far outnumbered the Canadian boats in Area Three last year. More than 70 vessels of Canadian registry cleared for Area Three this season. An added factor in shortening the season was the rush of Seattle boats to Area Three after the termination of the dispute between the owners and fishermen early this month. However, had the Seattle fleet been operating during the whole season, both areas might have been closed by this time.

Halibut landings at Prince Rupert this year from the regular halibut boats total 10,350,000 pounds, a reduction of almost 1,000,000 pounds under the same period last year. Area Two landings this year were 7,028,000 pounds while Area Three landings to date have been 3,322,000. Last year, 12,129,500 pounds.

SOCKEYE FISHING DISAPPOINTING

Sockeye salmon fishing on the north coast so far has been relatively disappointing in all areas. At River Inlet, probably the best seine district, catches have been decreasing all week. Seine catches on Monday were 150 fish per boat, average, dropping to 130 on Tuesday, and continuing to slide downward until Friday, when they were only 80 fish per boat. Seining in the Naas-River area has been so unsatisfactory that practically all vessels have

moved farther south. Gillnetters on the Skeena have been averaging 25 to 30 fish daily, and only slightly better on the Naas. Seiners which left the Naas River mainly went to Butedale where they have been getting about 150 fish daily.

The Bella Bella and Bella Coola seining areas open for salmon on Sunday at midnight, according to an announcement by the fisheries department.

The converted navy fairmile patrol boat Princess Louisa Inlet, now a luxury cruiser belonging to the Malibu Club at Princess Louisa Inlet, stopped briefly in port here Thursday afternoon, heading south after a cruise to Ketchikan with nine passengers. The vessel probably will be making frequent cruises up the coast this season.

It was Union steamships afternoon again yesterday at the local

waterfront. Arriving at 12:45 noon was the steamer Catala, Capt. Ernest Sheppard, from Vancouver and coast cannery points. She sailed at 5 p.m. on her return south. At 3:30 the Cassiar, Capt. Lorne Godfrey, arrived from Vancouver via the south end of Queen Charlotte Islands and sailed at midnight for Massett Inlet whence she is due back tomorrow morning. The Camosun, Capt. Harry McLean, arrived at 4 p.m. from Vancouver and Ocean Falls and sailed at midnight for Ketchikan whence she is due back here this evening southbound.

Mrs. Edna Maxted of Terrace was a recent arrival in Prince Rupert for treatment at the Prince Rupert General Hospital, being accompanied on the trip to the coast by her sister, Mrs. F. Woodrow.

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