

Waterfront Whiffs

Fishermen Would Open Season for Halibut June 1—Other Requested Changes in Regulations

Prince Rupert Deep Sea Fishermen's Union plans to recommend that the 1948 halibut fishing season be opened on June 1, instead of May 1, which has been the opening date for the last several years. The recommendation will be placed before representatives of the halibut fishermen of Washington, British Columbia and Alaska early next month.

If the fishermen's unions of the other ports agree, the recommendation then will be placed before the International Fisheries Commission annual conference which meets in Seattle on January 9, along with other recommendations.

Prior to the conference, representatives of the halibut fishermen will meet to co-ordinate their requests to the commission, a policy that eliminates contradictory resolutions coming from different unions when they come before the commission.

Need for such co-ordination is illustrated by a request which the Ketchikan Deep Sea Fishermen's Union has drawn up. The Ketchikan fishermen have gone on record as urging that the 1948 season be opened on May 20.

However, when the fishermen meet privately prior to the convention, this difference will be reconciled and the group will ask that it be opened on a certain date, one on which all the representatives agree.

The local halibut men also will ask that the percentage of "licensed" halibut—those which may be caught under special permit by boats engaged in another type of fishery, notably black cod—be increased from 14 per cent as at present to 2 per cent.

In this, both the Prince Rupert and Ketchikan fishermen are in accord, although the Ketchikan men have gone even further. They ask that the period in which halibut may be caught under permit be extended to from March 15 to Novem-

ber 15. At present halibut may be caught under permit only during the prescribed halibut season.

Another request that the Prince Rupert union will make is that the use of auto trawl gear be restricted to specified areas and prohibited in the recognized halibut fishing grounds. This is an old complaint on the part of the halibut men who claim that dragging by auto trawlers disturbs the halibut feeding grounds and also catches a percentage of young halibut.

The Ketchikan fishermen also will request that the halibut quota for Areas Two and Three be increased by 5,000,000 pounds above the levels of 1947. They will ask that the increase be divided evenly between both areas.

From Ketchikan will come a recommendation that all halibut boats be licensed. This request was made to the commission several years ago by the Prince Rupert union but nothing came of it. The Ketchikan fishermen will insist on getting action from the commission on the extermination of sea-lions which are a plague to the fishing industry.

Curtailed, the favored method of equalizing the halibut catches among the fishermen by extending the season, probably will not be brought before the commission because they feel that before an effective curtailment policy can be brought into force, a new international treaty must be adopted. Drafts of a new treaty have reposed at Ottawa and Washington for the last two years, but the governments have not yet got around to acting on them.

FILM COUNCIL MEETING FAILS

May Not Be Able to Take Advantage of Offerings if More Interest Not Shown

Lack of attendance last night forced cancellation of the semi-monthly meeting of the Prince Rupert Film Council which had planned to organize the operating structure for the exhibition of entertainment and educational films in the city.

Purpose of the meeting was to have been to set up authority for the distribution of the monthly shipments of films

which have already begun to arrive from National Film Board regional headquarters at Vancouver on the basis of preliminary organizational efforts have been made.

Ten films which arrived in the city on December 15 have received no local showings so far because, according to Sgt. L. A. N. Potterton, Film Council chairman, the machinery for their distribution has not been completed by the council.

Original plan of the council was to turn the films over to the public library where they could be taken for display by organizations which are members of the council.

"If we can't get the backing of the organizations which originally expressed interest then we can't carry on," Sgt. Potterton said this morning. "We need their whole-hearted support at least until we get started."

Under the Film Council plan, organizations desiring to use the films can have them for display by joining the council and paying the \$2.50 annual dues. The film shipments are kept one month, then exchanged for other films.

Films in the December shipment, which will be here until

EMPLOYMENT AT FISH PLANTS LOW

Employment at Prince Rupert's fish plants has reached a winter low and is now only about one-third of its "normal" summer level. It is estimated that at the present time there are about 120 fish workers employed along the waterfront as compared with more than 300 during the height of the season last summer.

This seasonal slump, however, may be offset early in the year when the reduction of American import tariffs on fish come into effect. This reduction was a result of the Geneva trade negotiations early in the fall and provides that the American government cut import duties on salmon and halibut from one cent to half a cent a pound. Local observers believe that this may result in a movement of frozen fish into the States with consequent employment of some fish handlers.

The Canadian Fish and Cold Storage Co. seiner Chief Seegay returned to port here Friday morning after a month of "spotty" herring fishing on the lower coast. Under Capt. Ralph Green, the Seegay hit a few days good fishing at Rivers Inlet, but on the whole found the coast waters relatively unproductive.

Herring production in Fisheries District Two from the start of the season until December 6 was 6,872 tons, the bulk of the catches being made in the Rivers Inlet, Bella Coola and Bute-dale areas. There has been no herring found near Prince Rupert this fall. Herring pack for the whole coast for the season has been 818,989 cases.

The Fishermen's Co-operative has received a couple of shipments of herring from Ketchikan but the amount was not great. Early this week seiners were catching herring in Ketchikan harbor.

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2:00—Badminton.
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9:15—Community Carol Sing.
MONDAY P.M.
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6:00—Bo-Me-Hi Girls.
7:00—Peoples Store.
8:00—Morgan's.
9:00—Savoy.
Special Events
8:00—Band Practice.
8:30—J.C.C. Public Speaking Class.

January 15, are "Fur Trade," "Klee Wek," "Listen to The Prairies," "Let's All Sing," "Second Freedom," "Sand and Flame," "Toronto Symphony," "Wind From the West" and "Your Children's Eyes."

DEATH RATE LOW
The lowest death rate recorded for any country was that of New Zealand in 1932 and 1933 with 8 per 1,000 population.



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