

Harvest Of The Sea Mainstay Of Two Countries

Fishing Industry Is Basis For Common Interests

A great maritime industry—fishing—has, in the last half-century, established a unity of interest between Prince Rupert and southeastern Alaska which, probably more than anything else, has been the basis of the other firm bonds that have been formed since both areas began their development.

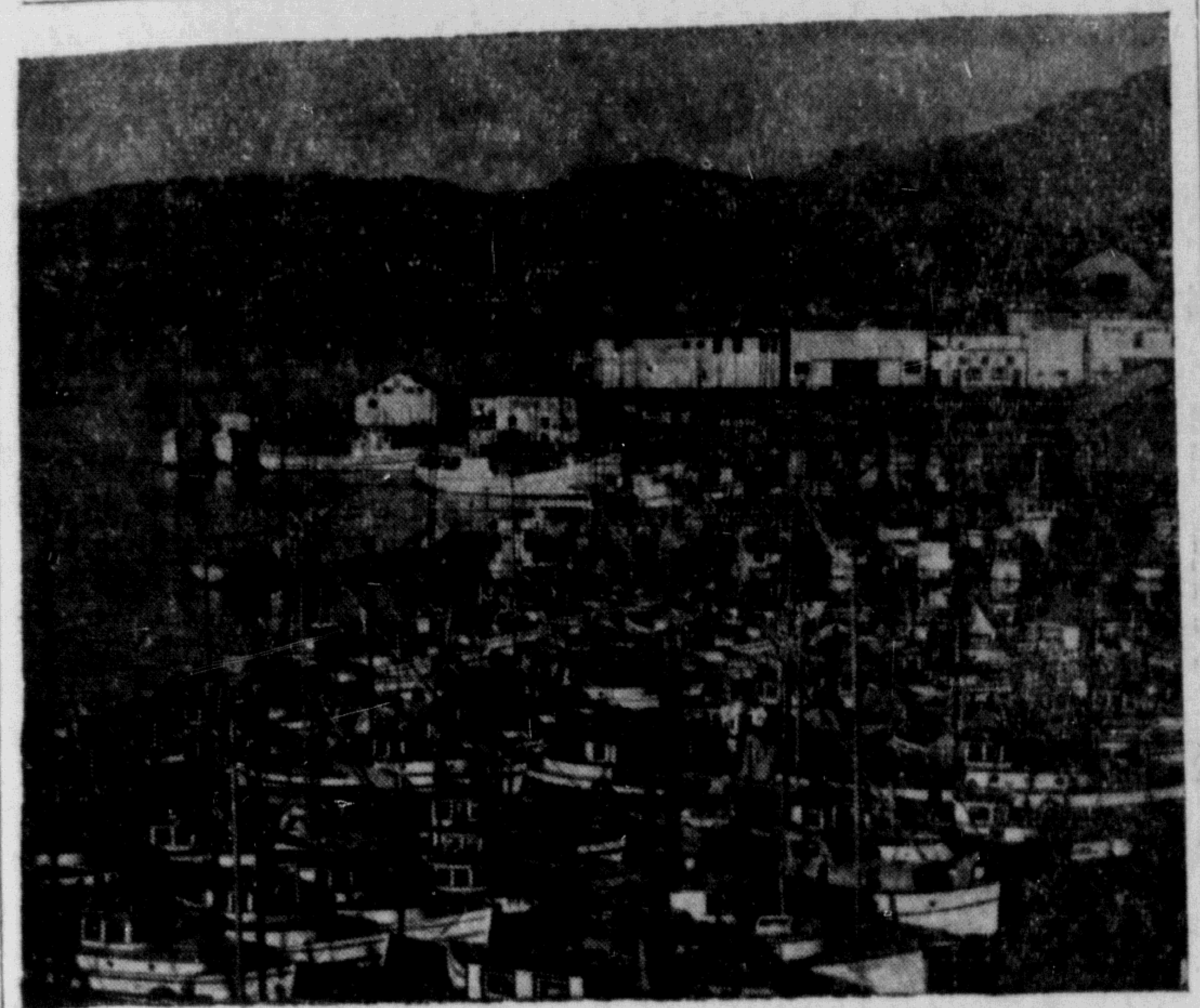
Between Canada and Alaska there is a demarcation line which, on the whole, separates the two populations. But on the sea, on the fishing grounds, there is an internationalism which extends even to the fishing ports and has become the root of a lasting friendship.

Canadian and American fishing fleets mingle on the grounds and they use each other's ports with a familiarity so firmly established that any port on either side of the line might be home.

This cannot be said to be one-sided, either. While Alaska boats use the port of Prince Rupert for fish deliveries, particularly in the summer halibut season, Prince Rupert vessels make equally routine calls to Ketchikan, Pelican and Sitka to clear for westward. And this has been

going on since the fishing industry on the north coast began. And in the matter of fishery regulations, there is agreement. Under the International Halibut Regulations, fishermen of both nations are bound by rules set by a joint authority and both countries have a hand in their enforcement.

It is this internationalism in the fishing industry which has worked to make Prince Rupert the greatest halibut city in the world. Without the vast Alaskan and American catches which pour through the fish sheds and cold storage plants at Canada's most westerly railhead, Prince Rupert would have enjoyed far less economic stability during its short history. Its own fleet, although it produced fast pound-



INDUSTRIAL MAINSTAY—Prince Rupert's fishing fleet has been backbone of economy since port's inception. Here is a typical fishing fleet scene of Prince Rupert waterfront. (Photo by Wrathall)

ages of halibut, never would have been able to sustain so high an economic pitch alone.

INTERDEPENDENCE IS INCREASING

Evidence of the growing interdependence between Prince Rupert and the southeast panhandle of Alaska, and for that matter, part of the peninsular coast as well, has been growing over the years as the American territory approaches determination of statehood.

Despite restrictive legislation, shipping movements between Prince Rupert and the Alaskan ports have been growing. Last autumn saw more than two million cases of Alaskan canned salmon moved in bond through Prince Rupert dockside warehouses to the undoubted economic advantage of both the original producers and the shippers.

But satisfying as these exchanges of commerce are, they remain only mere indications of the advantages which both areas might enjoy if freer movement were allowed. Prince Rupert is certainly in a position, from the standpoint of facilities, to cater to many of Alaska's needs.

At Prince Rupert are cold storage plants totalling 19,000,000 pounds capacity, which in the rush seasons, handle large quantities of American fish. Last year, they landed more than 2,000,000 pounds of American halibut, out of total landings of 15,000,000 pounds.

SURROUNDED BY CANNERIES

Like many southeastern Alaskan ports, Prince Rupert is surrounded by canneries. Last year, seven canneries within a 15-mile radius, produced more than 375,000 cases of salmon, better than one-third of the total British Columbia coast pack.

Operating near Prince Rupert are the Anglo-B.C. Packing Co. at North Pacific, B.C. Packers at Sunnyside, Canadian Fishing Co. at Carlisle, Cassiar Packing Co. at Cassiar, Francis Milner Co. at Seal Cove, Neison Bros. at Port Edward and J. H. Todd and Son at Inverness.

Concern over what was believed to be a continuous drop in salmon production on the Skeena River led to the establishment of an investigation on a scientific basis by the Fisheries Research station of Nanaimo five years ago. This year, the first of the reports of the investigation were published, with recommendations for measures which, it is believed, will bring back sustained production.

A new industry came to the north coast of British Columbia in 1948 and while, it is not known if it is here to stay, Fisheries Department officials and fishermen alike are fervently hoping that it will become part of the industry. It is the tuna fishery, which broke on an unprepared industry last summer and proved profitable while it lasted.

Fisheries Department boats prospecting off the Queen Charlotte Islands raised large schools of albacore, which had come close inshore. In the rush which followed, several hundred thousand pounds of the fish were taken, much being landed at Prince Rupert.

This year, Department boats will again scout the area starting in the late spring and the results of their findings will be made available to fishermen. The vessels also will act as safety patrols for any small boats which might get in difficulty in the

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Mr. Brett's Greetings



W. H. BRETT, M.L.A.

Greetings to our friends and neighbors of Alaska and congratulations on the occasion of your attainment to the status of statehood.

We of British Columbia, and especially of Prince Rupert, have a great deal in common with the citizens of Alaska. Together, much can be accomplished in the interest of the people of this great Pacific Northwest, by promoting fuller use of the splendid facilities available at this gateway port, promoting trade in this area, and thereby alleviating to great degree the restrictions presently in effect and fostered by certain transportation interests and which are not in the best interest of the people of the North.

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