15th October 1920.

Wm. A. Found, Esq.,

Ottawa.

Dear Mr Found;-

I am in receipt of your favours of the 25th and 27th inst., and thank you for the trouble you took in replying to my remarks at such length.

The canners had a preliminary meeting with Col. Cunningham recently, regarding government action re traps, drag seines, cohoe nets, fish inspection, etc., and are to meet him again on the 22nd inst. The report of this meeting will give you the concensus of opinion on these matters, but I trust you will pardon my replying more in detail to the views expressed in your letters.

Unfulfilled promises of artificial propagation work during the season of 1920.

You refer in last paragraph of 2nd page of your letter of the 25th ultc., to promises "given to Departmental officials." This is doubtless a typographical error. What my remarks had reference to were promises given by Col. Cunningham on several occasions - the last time being in your presence in his office the day I last saw you - that if we would lend the Department the services of our Namu hatchery superintendent, Mr Newcombe, the government would put in an egg taking station at Koeye this year. We agreed to this condition; instructed Mr Newcombe to take his orders from your officials; and made all preparations to use the eggs obtained to build up, first Koeye river, and second, many depleted streams in that area. The last words said to me on the subject the day I met you were to the effect that I could make my mind easy as to this work at Koeye; it had been fully decided upon; and would be done this season. But the season is over, the run of fish gone past, and not a move was made to carry out the promises.

Proper protection for fisheries.

I do not wish to convey the impression that your department neglected taking all the necessary steps, AS YOU SAW THEM, to preserve and maintain the fisheries. On the contrary I freely admit your every effort has had this as the paramount object. Where we differ is concerning the nature of the remedial steps to be taken. My contention - backed by many years of study and experience - is that you can only accomplish the desired object through weekly closed times and artificial propagation. I also think the main value of the weekly closed time is to supply the hatcheries with sufficient spawners to insure them an adequate take of eggs.

You rely solely on restricting and regulating commercial fishing to save from depletion ALL the fisheries of the mainland of British Columbia outside of Fraser and Skeena rivers and Rivers Inlet. Most of the numerous streams on Vancouver Island also are without artificial propagation. I know you have faith in the efficacy of your present policies, but what I cannot understand is what that faith is founded upon. Every salmon fishery I know of, the world over, bears witness directly against you, and I have yet to hear of any other natural resource, animal, vegetable, or mineral, that supports your contention. I certainly see contrary evidence in the present position of the fisheries of British Columbia, while the similar fisheries of our neighbours have become so affected that with them depletion is an established fact.

Naas river fishery.

The mere fact that the number of traps operated in American waters contiguous to Naas river increased from 4 in 1918 to 18 in 1919, and 20 the present season, is corroborative evidence that they are participating in the fishery. What the take of fish is may not be easily ascertained but most, if not all, of the trap operators freely confess the belief that they are intercepting Naas river salmon.

At the same time I do not blame the traps entirely for the poor results in 1919 and 1920. Reports of spawning ground conditions in 1914 and 1915 were distinctly unfavourable for good runs in 1919 and 1920, and the poor packs obtained both years were evidence of the correctness of the forecasts. Reports for 1916, on the other hand, were quite favourable and I look for a satisfactory pack in 1921.

That the gill net fishing area around Finlayson Island is in Naas river territory is proven by the fact that the fish were taken were caught on the down stream side of the net. IN OTHER WORDS THEY WERE PROCEEDING NORTHWARD WHEN INTERCEPTED. To exclude 300 Naas fishermen and to permit 1,000 Skeena fishermen to operate in this area, does not show evidence of protecting the fish. Even your own argument about protection for the Skeena applies with still greater force to the Naas, and until such time as you are satisfied in your own mind which river the fish are proceeding to, the logical thing would be to exclude the numerous Skeena fishermen rather than the comparatively few from the Naas.

As regards your remarks on this subject that "it is scarcely fair to suggest that our own officers were not doing their duty when they enforced the law" I would say such a suggestion was neither stated nor implied by me. I stated your officers declined to permit any violation of the law in this respect but I made no further comment whatever regarding their decision.

W. A. F. #3.

Size of mesh in Cohoe nets.

Your statement that the size mesh used in the north is "apparently intentional invasion of the law by the purchasers of such nets" is to my mind unwarrantably severe. The use of 6¼, 6½, and 6¾ inch mesh nets has been countenanced by your own officials, to my personal knowledge, for 10 or 12 years past. It has been openly permitted for so long that to now blame the operators for intentionally violating the law is unfair.

I gather from your letter that you think Bella Coola is the only area affected by the question. A like condition prevails all throughout the north. The fish vary in size in different localities, and there is a corresponding difference in size of mesh used, but in no northern area has a 7 inch mesh been employed.

I am sorry we do not agree as to the accuracy of my conclusion that the decision of your department was arrived at without a proper knowledge of the situation. I think however you must admit the weight of evidence is in my favour. Your opinion is based upon observations made by yourself and others on cursory inspection trips taken at rare intervals, and almost without exception at times when the Cohoe fishing season had not yet started. Even on the insufficient evidence obtained you admit;- "This regulation is an old one and MODIFYING IT HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY CONSIDERED. From certain standpoints the regulation is clearly objectionable.....It is realized the size of fish.... differ in different areas."

On the other hand my contention is backed up by the united experience of fishermen as well as canners, who are unanimously in favour of the smaller sized mesh. It would be absurd to say that these parties are asking for small meshed nets for the purpose of enabling them to extirminate the salmon. They are engaged in fishing as a permanent means of obtaining their livelihood, and their capital is employed in developing the industry. They cannot advocate measures which will destroy their capital and defeat their aim in life.

Furthermore I feel I am violating no confidences in saying that all your B. C. officials I have spoken to, from the highest to the lowest, do not believe a 7 inch mesh necessary for the preservation of the Cohoe fishery, nor that a 6¼, 6½, or 6¾ inch mesh is a menance to the sockeye fishery. On the contrary they admit that in northern waters the sockeye run is entirely over before 1st October, and that even were sockeyes present they would escape through a 6½ inch mesh as readily as through a 7 inch mesh.

In view of all the circumstances I trust you will reconsider your decision to insist on only 7 inch mesh nets being used in future. You say "it is more or less impractical to require different meshes for the various areas.", but the fishermen are to-day actually doing this very thing of their own accord. If it is not impractical

for them to actually accpmplish their object there should be no difficulty in the government making regulations to make their present methods lawful.

All of my remarks are made with the object in view of conveying to you my viewpoint and to convince you of its correctness. If anything I have said strikes you as being dictated by a spirit of antagonism please believe me when I say that nothing of the kind is intended. I am writing as frankly and openly as I would speak. I do not doubt or question the sincerity and earnestness of the motives by which you are actuated. We are both striving to foster, build up and protect the fishery resources of Canada, and I think we can accomplish this better and quicker by a broad and free discussion, and with all our cards laid face upwards on the table.

I will write you a separate letter on the subject of artificial propagation.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely

HD/P.