

25th February 1911.

H. L. P. Brodeur,

Minister of Marine & Fisheries,

Ottawa.

Dear Sir:-

Our company, as you are aware, are not members of the B. C. Canners Association, and therefore are not made acquainted with all the recommendations they forward your department. We often learn however of communications sent you but not as a rule until sometime after their letters have gone forward. We have just now received a copy of their letter of the 7th inst., to you in regard to the use of gasoline engines in fishing boats, and also their letter of the 22nd inst., in further reference to the same subject, and we wish to present our views in opposition to theirs regarding this question.

In the first place we wish to contradict the statement contained in their letter of the 7th inst., that "two or three years ago these boats were unknown in connection with the fishing." To our certain knowledge and experience fishing boats equipped with gasoline engines have been employed, not only by the writer, but also by others who are members of the B. C. Canners Association for at least six years past. Consequently their claim in this respect is incorrect.

Their second claim appears that the canners are installing engines in boats belonging to themselves and that a large number contemplated by the canners during the fishing season. In regard to this point I reply that we know of no canner in Victoria, N. S.

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is the owner of a fishing boat equipped with a gasoline engine, or none who are contemplating installing engines in boats belonging to them. Those gasoline boats which have fished in past years are the private property of the fishermen themselves, and any increase will be amongst these same individual owners. If therefore the Government accedes to the request of the B. C. Cannery Association it will virtually mean the confiscation of the property of these men to the extent of what they have invested in engines, and to do so, especially upon men of limited capital, such as fishermen possess, would be imposing a severe hardship. The engines used are all of very small horse power and the boats (except in the case of Indian owners) are used exclusively for fishing, consequently if the right to use engines is denied them there is no other channel open for the profitable utilization of their investment.

In the case of Indians, especially on the Nass river, a large percentage own their own boats and use them for fishing, the cannery paying them \$2. per week as a rental subsidy. For the remainder of the year outside of the fishing season they use their boats for transportation purposes up and down the river. In northern waters the tides are so strong that it is impossible to row against them and to overcome this the more enterprising natives have installed small engines in their boats. In this way they profit by their possession throughout the entire year and to prohibit their using power boats in the fishing would not only deprive them altogether of the use of their boats during that period but would be the occasion of adding greatly to their present dissatisfaction and unrest, which, as you are aware, has been a source of uneasiness to settlers and peace officers for several years past. On the Nass alone there must

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at least a dozen Indian owners of gasoline boats, and it must be remembered that the money they have invested represents a huge sum to them, and we would certainly suggest that you obtain the views of the Indian agent before taking any action that would deprive these people of the fruits of their enterprise.

The letter of the 7th inst., from the B. C. Cannery Assn. states "From the experience of last year, the catch of fish will be increased 150 to 250 per cent over the average taking by boats operated with sails or oars." This statement is absolutely false and is made only through absolute ignorance of the subject or with the intention of deliberately misleading your department.

Last season we employed seven fishermen who operated boats equipped with gasoline engines. This was approximately 15% of the total employed in District No. 2 and we think was a greater number than any other cannery in the district fished. We therefore think the results obtained by us (and we know the experience at other places was the same) will be a fair criterion of how the take of boats outfitted with gasoline engines compared with those depending solely on sails and oars. Of the seven power boats we employed two were operated by Indians and five by Japanese fishermen. The results were as follows:-

Indians.

Average take of Indian fisherman	1620 fish
High gasoline boat	3015 "
Mid high " "	2551 "
High sail and oar equipped boat	3389 "
Mid high " " " "	2852 "

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Japanese.

Average take of Japanese fishermen	3014 fish
High gasoline boat	4610 "
2nd " "	4451 "
3rd " "	3792 "
4th " "	3709 "
5th " "	3491 "
High sail and car equipped boat	3373 "
2nd " " " " "	3209 "
3rd " " " " "	3165 "
4th " " " " "	2968 "
5th " " " " "	2650 "

Thus it will be seen that in the case of Indian fishermen the average for gasoline boats was 2783 fish, or 70% above the general average and as most Indians are proverbially lazy the difference is much greater with them than with any other class of fishermen. It will be noticed that the first and second high sail and car equipped boats beat the first and second high gasoline boats respectively, which shows power boats have not proven superior to the ordinary kind with the most enterprising of the native fishermen.

The Japanese gasoline boats averaged 4010 fish or an increase over the general average of 33 1/3%, instead of "150 to 250 per cent" as the B. C. Canners Assn. would lead you to believe. Our experience with these fishermen has been that their increased catches were due to their availing themselves of the power to go farther afield for their operations and thus fish in waters where the boats were not so crowded together. They thus individually did

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latter, but we contend that instead of it proving that the use of gasoline boats means increasing the total catch of the river it only resulted in these outside fishermen getting an increased catch at the expense of those who fished behind them. If every boat was operated by power so that all would be on an equality, we contend the difference in their total catch as compared to the old methods would have but an inappreciable effect upon the fishing. If the department were to penalize these fishermen for their enterprise they should, to be consistent, prohibit cannerys from using steam tugs and large power gasoline boats for the purpose of towing fishing boats to these outside waters, and they should likewise prohibit the employment of Whites and Japanese fishermen because they are twice as efficient fishermen as the Indians, who up to a few years ago had the fishing in District No.2 practically to themselves. The adoption of either of these propositions would be strenuously opposed by all cannerys, but we contend they would be as just measures as that of prohibiting a gasoline boat owner from profiting by his enterprise.

On the Fraser river in the past few years quite a large number of gasoline boats have been employed. The fishing there however has declined to such an extent that many fishermen have made arrangements to transfer their operations to District No.2 where they can obtain more profitable employment for their power boats. Thus to comply with the request of the B. C. Cannery Assn. would be seriously affecting the financial position of these men, to whom their investment in power boats means as much in proportion as the cannery plants do to the cannery owners. The latter would be the first to complain if any legislation was proposed that would render any portion of their investment valueless and we think they should extend to others

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the same consideration they would look for themselves.

As to the remaining contentions of the B. C. Canners Assn. we need say little. As far as infractions of regulations are concerned we consider their fears groundless and would refer you to Inspector Sword as to whether on the Fraser he has found power boat fishermen have violated the regulations to any greater extent than other fishermen. The strength of the tides in District No.2 will continue to limit the time of fishing in future as it has in the past, despite what style of power the boats may employ, and the use of two or more nets is a matter largely in the control of the canners themselves, as they own all the fishing gear employed in the fishing. As to the danger of permitting Indians to use power boats our experience has not shown any increase in liquor consumption due to that cause, and in this we are sure the Indian Agent can corroborate us. This contention we think the B. C. Canners Assn. have themselves answered in their letter of the 22nd inst., where they state "Indians --- are not capable of managing power boats.", a statement which unquestionably applies to the greater percentage of them.

There is another subject brought up in the B. C. Canners Assn. letter of the 22nd to which we take exception. This is the question of the Fishery Inspector residing in District No.2 throughout the year. If salmon fishing was the only branch of the industry requiring the Inspector's attention their attitude would be all right, but since his duties embrace all other fisheries as well, and as most of these others are winter enterprises, we think the proposed change very desireable. It has been a notorious fact for years that American vessels poach on our halibut fishing grounds and this could

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be better guarded against from local headquarters than from 500 or 100 miles away. The fishery industry of Prince Rupert and vicinity is now assuming considerable proportions and will be materially augmented once the G. T. P. road is in operation. With Mr Cunningham located here matters of interest to the canners can be taken up through him, leaving the Inspector for District No. 2 more time to keep in touch with happenings in the north. Cannery licenses should be obtainable from either office, while as regards fishermen's licenses these have always been taken out in the district where the licensee intended fishing and never, to our knowledge, in this city.

Trusting you will take these contentions into consideration before acting on the recommendations of the B. C. Canners Association, we are

Yours very truly

Kineolith Packing Co. Limited.

*Henry Doyle*  
Manager.

H. D.