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NAME Mr R. J. Gadsby c/o The Fisheries Association of British Columbia

ADDRESS 510 Shelly Building 119 West Pender St Vancouver B.C.

Dear Sir:- 1st May 1956

Long before this I should have written to thank you for your kindness in sending me a copy of your report to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects. My only excuse is that it was the income tax period of my chartered accountant son's business and he had enlisted my assistance during this period.

You certainly deserve congratulations on the report you submitted to the Commission. It is thorough, well written, and very comprehensive. It exceeds any other report I have read on this particular subject and sets a standard that other natural resources commentators might advantageously copy.

I quite appreciate that in this particular field the preservation of British Columbia's salmon fisheries might not be of paramount interest. This undoubtedly accounts for the rather scant space allotted in your report to this phase of fishery problems.

However, it seems to me your association and its allied interests both in British Columbia and on Puget Sound are in very grave danger of seeing the salmon fisheries absolutely destroyed in the very near future unless greater activity is shown in fighting with all available publicity against the attempts of hydro electric interests to build dams on the Fraser, Columbia, Naas, and other rivers, or sections thereof, in which sockeye and humpback salmon especially deposit their spawn or in which their progeny reside pending the journeying to their oceanic habitat.

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Up to the present time practically no real attempt has, or is being made to fight fire with fire. G.K. Chesterton once wrote that any subject, no matter how undeserving its purpose, would be made effective by constant reiteration unless it was as consistently contradicted: that without such contradiction it would finally be accepted as authentic and true.

That is the situation confronting the salmon fishing industry to-day. The hydro-electric advocates want to harness our rivers to obtain power for their companies irrespective of the harm that would befall all other interests and in their contemplations there is not even a thought of giving monetary compensation to those adversely affected.

It is true that the B.C. Power Corporation has granted a large sum of money for the purpose of investigation into the possibility of harm being done the Fraser river fishery but since then it has been asserted in the press the corporation favours the diversion of Columbia river water into the Fraser. And this, before the investigators have issued any public report on this particular phase of the problem.

It is understood the grant made by the B.C. Power Corp. is to be expended under the supervision of Dr MacKenzie of the U.B.C. Since Dr MacKenzie's acceptance of this assignment he has been reported in the press as favouring the proposal of harnessing our rivers.

The press also quoted the British Columbia government as opposing any action that would injure the province's salmon fisheries and yet since then, and without waiting for Dr MacKenzie's findings Hon. Mr Gagliardi has been reported as favouring the hydro-electric viewpoint.

I do not cite these actions in an attempt to disparage any of these gentlemen. They certainly are entitled to their own personal opinions. What I am pointing out is that all three instances practically are endorsements of the hydro-electric's position and not one word of opposition or repudiation seems to have been advanced by the fishing industry.

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NAME A similar ~~case~~ campaign preceded the granting of the permit to the Aluminium Company for the Nechako project. The

ADDRESS International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission went on record in opposition to this application without a thorough preliminary investigation as to the effect on the salmon fishery but aside from this practically no resistance was offered and the Aluminium Company easily attained its objective. No doubt ~~the~~ the newer applicants for Fraser, Columbia and Nass river priviledges were inspired by the Aluminium Co's success and they too will succeed if the fishery interests are as lax and dilatory now as they were on the previous occasion.

The situation resembles a prize fight where one contestant is landing all the blows and his opponent offers no effective counter attacking. Sooner or later the man on the receiving end will receive his quietus and be counted out and none will sympathize with him in his defeat.

Our governments on both sides of the International Boundary Line have spent, and are spending, thousands of dollars on investigating the deep sea habitat of salmon originating on this shore of the Pacific Ocean. They are contemplating joint action with other powers to prevent over-exploitation by selfish fishing interests either foreign or domestic. Why are not these government officials equally active in safeguarding the birth and fresh water development of the salmon on which the oceanic fishery depends?

The daily press, our fishery magazines, and other publications devote pages and pages to discussing this mid-ocean problem, Russian and Japanese boundaries of Asiatic fishing waters, and the recent meetings of fisheries interests in Japan. But all they have written and published on the subject of the encroachment of hydro-electric development, actual or proposed, on salmon spawning preservation is well under five per cent of that devoted to these extraneous subjects.

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It never seems to enter into the heads of these private and/or governmental authorities that none of these matters will require legislative action if no salmon will be available for capture and that distruction is inevitable if the salmon spawning grounds are destroyed.

This paramount and certain disaster would follow the burial of salmon spawning and feeding areas under the vast depths of lake water the building of dams will create. This would inevitably occur and yet it is the one special phase of the matter which scientists and all branches of the fishing industry persistently ignored and are continuing to ignore.

All speak of finding some feasible method of by-passing ascending and descending salmon past dams hundreds of feet high when they have not succeeded in the past hundred years in safeguarding such passage by dams of only fifty feet in height. They know the percentage of distruction with salmon fry that are swept into turbines, is enormous and they have found no method for controlling such destruction. These are problemns that are still unsolved and yet they countenance the building of dams before remedies have been found. They are willing to now risk their all on the off chance of finding effective and reasonable methods some time, some day in future years, shutting their eyes and minds to the almost certainity that if and when such a day arrives there will be no salmon left in those lake waters.

Mine is the second generation whose life has been connected with our salmon fisheries; a connection which extends back to the very commencement of the salmon canning industry. I personally knew most of the original pioneers of all the Pacific Coast States, Alaska and British Columbia and have lived through the periods of their heydays and disasters. "Experience is the best teacher" and what I learned from past experiences warns me against aiding or abetting any project that would jeopardize the salmon fisheries future to favour hydro electric development before its possible ill effects are definitely provided against and controlled. There is no present certainity water power will be as essential to hydro-electric production ten years from now as its present users claim it will be. But it is very certain our salmon resources once destroyed will be lost to us forever.

Yours faithfully

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