CANADIAN-AMERICAN FISHERIES CONFERENCE

Report Advocates Complete Reciprocity between Two Countries—Provision for Protection and Renewals of Resources

IMPORTANT recommendations are made in the report, made public on July 26th, of the Canadian-American Fisheries Conference, appointed to consider a settlement of outstanding fishery questions between Canada and the United States. The questions submitted and considered by the conference were: Privileges to the fishing vessels of either country in the ports of the other; rehabilitation and protection of the sockeye salmon of the Fraser River system; protection of the Pacific halibut fishery; fishing by United States lobster wellsmacks off Canadian coasts; protection of the fisheries of Lake Champlain; requirements imposed on Canadian fishing vessels passing through territorial waters of Alaska; protection of the sturgeon fisheries; protection of whales.

Abolish All Duties

On the first question the report traces the history of the controversy back over one hundred years. It expresses the belief that the question can never be permanently removed from the field of discord unless the markets of both countries are available to the fishermen of both on the same terms. The commissioners recommend that the Canadian duty on fish and fresh frozen fish, not including shell fish, be removed, and, with a view to assuring stability in the industry, that the two countries enter into an agreement by which such fish shall be admitted customs duty free from either country into the other, and that such arrangement remain in force for fifteen years, and thereafter until two years after the date, when either party thereto shall give notice to the other of its wish to terminate.

They recommend that Article 1 of the treaty of October 20th, 1818, be amended so as to make available in either country, to the fishing vessels of the other, the privileges covered by the instructions of the United States Secretary of Commerce to collectors of customs of that country, dated February 21st, 1918, and by the Canadian order-in-council, dated March 8th, 1918, in substance as follows:—

1. That the fishing vessels of either country may enter from the high seas any port of the other, and clear from such port back to the high seas and the fishing grounds.

2. That the fishing vessels of either country may dispose of their catches and purchase bait, ice, coal, nets, lines, oil, provisions and all other supplies and outfits in the ports of either country.

3. That the repairing of fishing implements in the ports of either country be allowed to the vessels of the other country.

4. That the fishing vessels of either country may dress, salt and otherwise prepare their catches on board such vessles within the territorial waters of the other country.

5. That the fishing vessels of either country may ship their crews and tranship their catches in the ports of the other country.

6. That the fishermen of either country may sell their catches in the ports of the other country, subject to the local tariff, if any.

To Rehabilitate Sockeye Salmon

With regard to the rehabilitation and protection of the sockeye salmon of the Fraser River, the commissioners express the opinion that a treaty or convention for the proper regulation of the fisheries should be entered into by Canada and the United States. Commisisoners should be appointed under this treaty to study the situation, inspect the hatchery operations, and also the sides of the river, to ascertain where slides which might bar the ascent of the fish might occur. They append a draft of a proposed treaty for the restoration and protection of the fishery, the adoption of which, subject to such modifications as responsible officers of the two governments may consider necessary, is urgently recommended.

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