

18/28383.

March 2, 1933.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer further to Departmental letter dated November 5th, last, No.74-150, in regard to the request of Mr. Wm.A. Found, Deputy Minister, Department of Fisheries, to the effect that this Department should give encouragement to an effort to modify and possibly eliminate the practice on the part of certain Indians of taking salmon of the sockeye variety for food on the remote spawning grounds in the headwaters of the Fraser, Skeena and other important sockeye salmon streams, through the continuance of this Department's arrangement and, if possible, its expansion, whereby coastal Indians catch and prepare fall varieties of salmon adjacent to streams where the spawning requirements would not be jeopardized by so doing, suitable substitutes of fish for the valuable sockeye being available.

In my letter of November 17th, last, addressed to the Department I mentioned a report made by the late Commissioner Ditchburn to Dr. Duncan C. Scott, dated February 18th, 1919, also a preliminary report prepared by Mr. Agent Ball for Mr. Ditchburn and dated September 5th, 1931. It is thought that both of these reports should be perused by the Department in its approach to this present report, inasmuch as by so doing it will be observed that the report of Mr. Ditchburn was made under the assumption that the restrictions to be placed upon fishing by the Fisheries Department had application to the waters of the Fraser River while in the second paragraph it was noted that "it is not proposed to put an estoppel on the Indians from getting any salmon at all." The estimate placed by Mr. Ditchburn at that time upon the probable cost of supplying fish from the coast to the Interior Indians was in view of the prices of fish then prevailing. Conditions have completely changed since then as to prices of fish, although it should be noted as to territory that Mr. Found embraces the Skeena and other important salmon streams in addition to the Fraser River. In view of the emphasis placed by Mr. Found upon the desirability of eliminating the taking of sockeye salmon only, in the spawning areas excluding all other varieties, it can be reasonably remarked that Mr. Ditchburn's report would have less bearing upon the investigation now under consideration, except for purposes of comparison.

In the case of Mr. Agent Ball's report, this had reference to the possible supply of coastal dried salmon to be given as relief to destitute Indians of Interior Agencies and not as a substitute for all or any classes salmon which the Indians generally had been accustomed to taking in Interior waters.

The Secretary,
Department of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa,
Ont.

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