

HALIBUT TREATY

8. Your Committee, after hearing the evidence on the Pacific halibut fishery, are satisfied that the convention between Canada and the United States of America for the preservation of the halibut fishery of the North Pacific Ocean and Behring Sea, signed at Ottawa on the 9th day of May, 1930, has in the few years of its operation, already given proof of the gradual rehabilitation of this industry.

9. Halibut has become more plentiful as proved by the size of the catches and the shorter time necessary to secure the allotment under the regulations, so that instead of a gradual depletion as before the treaty's enactment, there is now a decided trend in the opposite direction.

10. All the international co-operation from the original International Commission of Investigation in 1917, leading up to the first Treaty of 1924, and then the subsequent more intensive, thorough investigation carried on under the direction of the International Commission, set up by the terms of that treaty, leading up to:—

- (1) Restriction of catches in various areas.
- (2) The abolition of fishing in nursery areas, together with the modification of the closed season, as set up in the present Halibut Treaty of 1930.

is commended by your Committee. In doing so, however, it expresses the hope that our Commissioners on the International Commission should always be men not only of scientific ability and experience, but also strong and active enough physically to carry out all their duties, both afloat and on shore. Personnel in this respect was emphasized as absolutely necessary for the future success of the work of that body.

11. It was shown that a large percentage of the fishermen and dealers in fresh and frozen halibut approved of the work of the Commission, and suggest even that its powers be increased under a revised treaty, so that it may be able to control the fishing vessels engaged in that industry; that the catch may be extended over the entire fishing season to the advantage of the fishermen's market and also benefit the consumer who would secure the product fresher over a longer period. As the voluntary method among the fishermen themselves failed in this purpose, your Committee recommend that the treaty be revised to the extent of granting to the Commission these additional powers.

12. If, and when, this Halibut Treaty comes up for revision, your Committee feel that although strictly outside its aims for the protection and maintenance of the fishing industry itself, the matter of markets for the halibut should be, if possible, included in the deliberations. Sharing the expenses equally for maintenance of the fishery should be followed, the Committee feel, by the sharing of markets also. If all tariffs were removed from halibut catches in both countries, the industry internationally built up scientifically on a fifty-fifty basis, could market the product economically on an equal basis also.

13. Your Committee also feel since the waters of Hecate Strait are Canadian, a revision of the Halibut Treaty should either exclude this area from its terms, or set a fixed and higher percentage of halibut caught in the various areas to Canadians for the privilege granted American fishermen to fish in Canadian waters.