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While in the fourth paragraph of Mr. Agent Ball's report it is noted he states he is advised that salted salmon were once purchased for the Indians and they were unfit for consumption when they received them, and that an Indian wants only smoked salmon and smoked in the Indian way, if possible, it would seem as a result of my recent inquiries and from the questionnaires received duly filled in from Interior Agents where dried salmon have been received from the coast, the matter of satisfying the Interior Indians with acceptable coastal dried fish is a definite problem. I have had fish returned to this office by Indians that were sent through Mr. Ball which were not fit for human consumption when received. This, of course, is no reflection upon Mr. Ball's effort to overcome the problem of supply. It emphasizes however the need for preventing any substitute fish from reaching the Indians in a condition which may give them a wrong impression of the Government's intentions, thereby strengthening their existing argument in favor of taking the fish in the spawning areas. Probably Mr. Ball had not seen or handled the fish in question; as it is customary to tranship them from Vancouver to the Interior without opening and examining the contents of the packages, the latter being sent by boat to Vancouver where they pass from one wharf to another without inspection. Some of the fish thus sent, however, has reached its destination in good condition and where such has been the case the fish were acceptable to the Indians.

It should also be noted in Mr. Ball's report that he observed "it is possible the Fishery Department may assist in the expense if we can show them that the spawning fish will not be taken." Here is another problem of a two-fold nature: The first phase is that Mr. Pound has stated his Department cannot meet any of the expense; the second is that the Agents' questionnaires do not encourage the expectation that the Indians would not continue to take salmon in the spawning areas even though they may be supplied with coast dried salmon. Mr. Ball's estimate of \$18500.00 a year for the purchase and shipping of fish desired for indigent Interior Indians is not emphasized by the needs as outlined by the Interior Agents in their questionnaires. This matter of estimate is most difficult, no two officials being able to find agreement as to the probable numbers of salmon caught by Indians. The range between numbers shown in several reports,--Fisheries and Indian--vary widely, giving rise to the question as to the extent to which this Department should properly extend its financial aid in supplying Interior Indians with fish by way of food supply. Up to the present the small grant of less than \$2000.00 has been sufficient wherewith to furnish coast dried salmon to meet the demands which have been made in behalf of indigent Indians by the Indian Agents concerned. Nor do the contents of the several forms of questionnaires, which are submitted herewith, seem to indicate that the above-mentioned demand will be likely to increase to the extent of the sum mentioned by Mr. Agent Ball. I would ask that the forms of questionnaire be examined by the Department. These are from the Babine, Bella Coola, Skeena River, Kamloops, Kootenay, Lytton, Nicola, Okanagan and Williams Lake Agencies, respectively, and will be self explanatory. That of Babine Agency is further dealt with by letter, copy of which is attached.

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