

FISHERIES NEWSLETTER

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Territorial Waters

WITH the cessation of hostilities in Europe, the important question of re-establishing the high seas pelagic and demersal fisheries will shortly claim the attention of international authorities. States the world over will have to determine the limits of waters adjacent to their respective sovereign authorities in respect of which authority may be exercised if pelagic fish stocks are to be afforded full protection.

Responsible authorities on international law have given the opinion that there is no uniform area adjacent to coasts over which sovereignty may be exercised.

Professor Stefan A. Rosenfeld, in his "Protection of Coastal Fisheries under International Law" (Washington D.C., 1942, p. 280) writes as follows:—

"At the outset it is clear that, as the Hague Conference made obvious to all the world, there is no such thing as a universally recognised three mile rule. Moreover, there is not a single nation which has given and for all nations adhered to the three mile rule."

Professor J. C. Bracey states in his book "The Outlook for International Law" (Oxford University Press, 1944, p. 41):—

"In the law of territorial waters it would be more than convenient to have a general rule defining uniformly the area adjacent to each State over which States may claim to exercise their sovereignty. No such rule, however, has yet proved practicable."

In his book, "Whalermen Adventurers," Professor Dalrymple deals with the struggle of the British and New Zealand Governments to control the activities of whaling companies operating in Antarctic waters. Control broke down because vested interests refused to recognize British or New Zealand claims of sovereignty over the waters in question.

If a rule which so defined the limits of sovereign responsibility could be drafted as to be acceptable to world powers, there is little doubt that the problem of protection of high seas fisheries, such as whaling, would be immeasurably simplified.

FISHERMEN'S CO-OPERATIVES FORMED IN NEW SOUTH WALES

THE movement towards the organization of the Australian fishing industry on co-operative lines received strong support along the south coast of New South Wales, when fishermen at Eden, Ulladulla and Huskisson met recently and decided upon the formation of fishermen's co-operatives at those centres.

Registration of a co-operative at Eden has been made, and application has been made for the registration of the Huskisson and Ulladulla co-operatives.

As an adjunct to the Eden Fishermen's Co-operative it was decided to form a Fishermen's Savings and Loan Society for the purpose of financing working fishermen members.

Mr. Sid Dawson, who owns the vessel "Ellera," is chairman of the Eden Society. He is also chairman pro tem. of the societies at Ulladulla and Huskisson.

Industry's Handings

At the inaugural meeting held at Eden, Mr. Dawson said that the fishing industry at Eden suffered from severe handings which, he considered, operated generally throughout the State to the detriment of the industry and the consumers. The principal factors, he said, were:—

1. Fish were loaded in bulk from trawlers into motor trucks for transport from Eden to the Sydney markets for sale by agents on behalf of the consignees.

2. The fishermen did not always receive waybills or other evidence of the quantity of their consignments at the time of loading into trucks, and the fish was, therefore, conveyed to the markets at their responsibility. They were entirely dependent on the accounting rendered to them by the Sydney agents by means of accounts sales, in which deductions from proceeds included transport costs as well as agents' commission.

3. Transport contractors provided a service at certain times, and the

fishermen were obliged to arrange their activities to meet the transport schedule instead of the transport services being arranged to cater for the volume of fish that could be produced.

4. Under these arrangements, so-called "platts" occurred at the markets, with the result that the fishermen did not obtain the returns which would be available with improved facilities, and the public continued to go short of fish.

5. The fishermen considered that they were sustaining substantial losses, due principally to:—

- (a) Loss of fish due to the primitive bulk loading arrangements;
- (b) Reduced returns due to lack of provision for a continuous flow of fish to the markets;
- (c) Other circumstances under which the fishermen were not in a position to look to anyone to carry responsibility for consignments from the time of loading the fish until they were sold in the markets.

Government Support

Mr. Dawson said that the Commonwealth Government had made announcements indicating its intention to sponsor and develop co-operative organisation amongst fishermen as a means of improving fish production. He had reason to

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FISHERMAN'S CO-OPERATIVES FORMED IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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believe that the State Government, which already had actively encouraged co-operation, was prepared to assist in this form of development.

"There are 24 trawler owners operating from Eden, as well as 20 line fishermen," said Mr. Dawson. "The rate of fish production at present is 450-500 tons a month, indicating an industry with a yield of some 480,000 annually at this port. The possibilities of the fishing grounds in and around this port are such that we believe Eden will become the principal fishing centre of New South Wales and probably the Commonwealth.

"Our primary objective is to establish a co-operative packing shed which will, on behalf of the fishermen, pack the fish (properly iced) in cases, arrange supplies of ice for the fishermen and make the necessary transport arrangements for delivery to the markets.

"With the development of this venture it is considered that others incidental to co-operative organisation of the fishing industry can also be successfully undertaken. Specifically these include—

1. Adequate berthing facilities for fishing vessels.
2. The manufacture of ice.
3. The provision of ship yards, repair shops and other facilities for maintaining the operation of trawlers.
4. Provision of gear, equipment and other requirements of fishermen.
5. Provision directly of a transport service operating between Eden and the market place or places.
6. Provision of plant for processing the fish as may be considered desirable or necessary.
7. Generally, the provision of any plant or service which might be in the interests of the fishermen or the fishing industry.

Future for Eden

"To undertake all the activities contemplated would require a capital expenditure of some £50,000. It is proposed that the fishermen provide a proportion of this capital by subscribing for shares in the Co-operative Society, on which at least 50% of the nominal value will be paid on application. It is further proposed to approach the Government with a view to obtaining the balance of the finance to meet the capital outlay or,

alternatively, securing a Government guarantee in respect of financial arrangements with a lending institution.

"It is our view that the fishing industry offers immense scope for co-operative development, and that, if a lead in this direction is provided by a large fishing centre such as Eden, co-operative organisation of the fishermen in other centres will follow, thus enabling development of a network of co-operatives embracing the whole fishing industry and entering for its activities from the catching of fish to its sale to the consumer, with benefits to the fishermen and to the community.

"The volume of the fishing business at Eden is sufficient guarantee that a venture of the nature proposed could be very easily carried by the local fishing community. The huge losses being sustained by the fishermen under existing conditions will be avoided and this factor will attract the support of the fishermen. The savings that can be effected will provide, over a period, for the capital outlay involved, and still leave a substantial margin to give added returns to the fishermen.

"For the reasons set out it is confidently anticipated that the Society when formed will operate successfully," he concluded.

CO-OP. SURVEY IN N.S.W.

All branches of the New South Wales United Fishermen's League have been invited by the executive of the League to consider their attitude to the formation of co-operative fish marketing organisations for the purpose of handling members' catches.

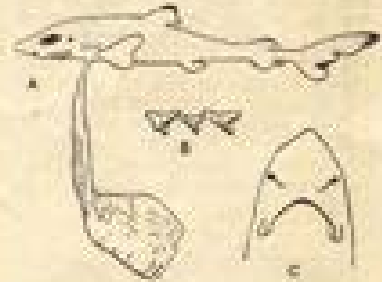
While an official result of the survey is available for publication, it is understood that a majority of the League's branches have notified the executive that they favour co-operative marketing in the industry.

THE SCHOOL SHARK

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capital invested, but a bold policy in respect of new vessels and equipment will be necessary to exploit distant grounds economically in the post-war years.

The liver oil is richer in vitamins than that of any other Australian shark so far tested, but the potency, which is expressed in international units per gramme, varies consider-



ably, probably due to the degree of maturity, sex, locality or food of the shark. The liver weight is about 5 per cent. of the whole weight or 10 per cent. of the dressed weight of the shark, but here again there is much variation.

The price of shark oil depends on the Vitamin A potency, which is variable, but the approximate figure is 1/2 per million units of Vitamin A. The average potency of the school shark liver oil obtained in the eastern states is approximately 15,000 i.u. per gramme, which gives a value of about £3/12- per gallon of oil. In Western Australia, school shark livers are of small size, but have yielded £250 to £2,000 i.u.; the highest value in Victoria was 80,000.

Brown, Price, Australia Pty. Ltd.



A young fisherman surveys a portion of a catch of 123 Jewfish made by Mr. J. L. Barbin, of Mor Head, Araluen River. Largest catch of Jewfish in this district was made two years ago, when Mr. Barbin landed 278 fish, worth nearly £'000. Salmon are taken in lots of 10-15 tons in this district.