

THE POINT OF VIEW OF INDUSTRY: FISHING BOAT OWNERS

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We observe other nations expanding their fisheries to the fullest extent and we ask, "Why are United States fishermen falling behind and what can be done to save the fisheries?" United States fishermen need help in many ways. Financially they have reached the point where they can no longer afford to gamble. Help is needed from Federal and State levels. Aid from these governmental agencies should be given in the following forms:

- 1) Financial encouragement should be given without an excessive amount of red tape.
- 2) Exploratory vessels, State or Federally subsidized.
- 3) Research information on:
 - (a) Latest types of fishing gear and electronic equipment.
 - (b) Availability of resources which can be properly harvested.
 - (c) Exploration of new fishing grounds.
- 4) Schools for both experienced and novice fishermen to learn new techniques in fishing gear and how to operate the latest electronic equipment.
- 5) The entire California Fish and Game Code should be reviewed and, where needed, revised to allow California fishermen to compete with nations who are starting to fish off our coastline. Foreign fleets fishing without gear, season, or method restrictions can and will exploit and damage available stocks.

Fish resources available to California fishermen, such as northern anchovies, Pacific hake, and jack and Pacific mackerel are of great abundance and are

very valuable. These resources should be harvested to the fullest extent without damaging the stock. California fishermen cannot do this because of State restrictions on areas and fishing gear. In 1967 the State Fish and Game Commission authorized a take of 75,000 tons of anchovies from an estimated 2-4 million ton local population. What they did not say was that they were going to tie both our hands to prevent us from harvesting them.

The Russians have more information on our different species than we have or than we can obtain from our fisheries agencies. There is no limit on what the Russians can catch 12 miles out. They have no season and no restrictions on fish size. By comparison, we will be arrested if we fish anchovies within 3 miles of our coast, and can only take 45,000 tons outside of 12 miles. If we attempt to use pelagic mid-water trawls of smaller mesh size than our Code allows, we are again subject to arrest. We are subject to arrest for everything we do.

We know that most of the leading fishing nations in the world are building new ships and boats. Their equipment is mostly for trawling. San Pedro fishermen are watching these developments very closely. Many of us would like to change from purse-seining to trawling but legal restrictions prevent us from doing so.

We hope that State and Federal officials will soon wake up to what is happening to the United States and California fishermen. If something isn't done soon there will be no commercial fishermen to worry about. The only thing to worry about will be the restrictions of the Russians.