Fishermen's Newsletter

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1979 Conservation Measures

On February 22, 1979 Dr. W.E. Johnson, Director-General, Fisheries & Oceans, presented to the Pacific Region Fisheries Management Advisory Council a number of regulatory proposals which would reduce wastage, conserve stocks and stabilize allocations in the 1979 salmon fishery. It was proposed that all user groups would contribute to short term actions pending the development of long term solutions to problems in the Pacific salmon fishery.

These proposals were also referred to the public through an information bulletin and to commercial fishermen through the Fishermen's Newsletter which is circulated to every licenced fisherman.

Dr. Johnson met with the Advisory Council on April 11, 1979 to receive the inputs of Council members on the regulatory proposals. Subsequently, these inputs and the written comments received from a number of interested individuals and organizations were considered by Dr. Johnson and his staff. As a result of these inputs and deliberations, a number of decisions will now be enacted.

A. **General**

1. For the 1979 season a log book system will be tested on a voluntary basis. Effort will be concentrated on commercial freezer trollers and seine boats in selected areas.

2. The proposal to change the weekly opening time for commercial net fishing from 6 p.m. Sunday to 6 p.m. Monday will not be invoked coastwide in 1979. The change will be tried in 1979 on a pilot basis in Area 23, Barkley Sound.

3. a) The proposal to open fishing areas for salmon gillnetting twenty-four hours prior to the seine fishery will be modified. On a trial basis and for a short period (July to early August) salmon gillnetting in Johnstone Strait will open twelve (12) hours prior to salmon seining.

b) The proposal to separate salmon gillnet and salmon seine fisheries (as was done in 1978 in Area 23, Barkley Sound) will be instituted on a local basis where there is a gear conflict problem identified by local fishermen.

4. The proposal to ban the use of fish pughs will not be instituted until 1980. This proposal was put forward as one step in improving fish handling and quality.

B. **Protection of Immatures**

1. The proposal to close localities to commercial fishing when and where there is a high abundance of immatures will be invoked on a problem-specific basis.

2. The proposal to modify seine bunts to specify large mesh (4" stretched measure when wet) in the last 10 fathoms of the bunt from corkline to leadline will be invoked for the 1979 season, effective September 1, 1979.

C. **The Salmon Purse Seine Fishery**

1. The proposal to limit the depth of salmon purse seines to 5.25 strips in all areas except Area 20 (San Juan) where 8.0 strips would be permitted will be modified. Fishermen are advised that regulations are being promulgated to restrict the depth of salmon purse seines in 1979 as follows:

a) To 5.75 strips or 28 fathoms vertical depth, whichever is lesser; except,

b) To 7.75 strips or 39 fathoms vertical depth, whichever is lesser, in Area 20 (San Juan).

2. Regulations are being promulgated to place a two-year ratorium on the use of run- g lines by salmon purse lers commencing in 1979.

). **The Troll Fishery**

1. The proposal to prohibit retention of pink salmon by lers prior to July 29, 1979 be modified; trollers will be wed to retain pink salmon o 25% of the daily number chinook and coho caught r to July 29, 1979. This lation will apply coastwide.

2. The proposal to restrict commercial salmon trolling he same open periods as ion net fishing inside the line will not be invoked on a twide basis. The current tice of regulating trollers le the surfline on an area by basis as required, will con- e.

3. The proposal to restrict fishing in the Strait of rgia to vessels equipped with not more than four gurdies and lines will be modified. All trollers fishing in the Strait of Georgia will be limited to fishing with not more than four lines and will not be permitted to carry more than four lines while fishing. Regulations are being promulgated.

4. The proposal to ban the use of treble hooks and barbed hooks in the commercial troll fishery will be invoked in 1980. The use of treble hooks will be prohibited entirely; the use of barbed hooks will not be permitted until the annual opening for coho fishing (July 1 in the Gulf of Georgia and June 15 elsewhere).

E. **The Gillnet Fishery**

1. The proposal to require combination boats to elect for one type of gear (i.e. gillnet or troll) between July 1 and September 30, 1979, will not be invoked.

F. **The Recreational Fishery**

1. The proposal to increase the minimum size limit from 12 inches to 18 inches will not be invoked.

2. Closure of local waters on a problem-specific basis will be applied to protect immature salmon for the short periods that special protection is needed.

3. Regulations will be promulgated to raise the minimum size limit for chinooks to 20 inches, effective January 1, 1980. No change in the minimum size limit (12 inches) for coho salmon is contemplated.

4. The proposal to ban the use of treble hooks and barbed hooks in recreational fishing will not be invoked.



Licence Appeal Board (l. to r., Steve Stavenes, Martin Eriksen, Rod Hourston, Fred Graham, Jack Meredith-Jones, Sam Larden) at first meeting, April 10th.

New Appeal Board Set Up

The Minister of Fisheries & Oceans, Romeo LeBlanc, has created a Fishing Vessel Licence Appeal Board for the British Columbia fishing industry. The Board will act on the Minister's behalf to review appeals and interview appellants who have been refused licences through the Department's normal licensing and appeal procedures but who feel there are extenuating circumstances in their particular cases. The Board's recommendations in each case will then be passed on to the Minister for a final decision.

The Board is comprised of five voting members, appointed by the Minister from names submitted by various fishing industry groups. Four of the Board are retired fishermen who have been selected on the basis of their experience with, and knowledge of, all aspects of commercial fishing in British Columbia. The four retired fishermen who have agreed to serve as Board members are Jack Meredith-Jones of Victoria, Steve Stavenes and Sam Larden from Vancouver, and Martin Eriksen from Prince Rupert. The fifth voting member is selected on the basis of objectivity and impartiality, not necessarily because of direct participation in the fishing industry. Frederick Graham of Vancouver, a retired Chartered Accountant who is familiar with the fishing industry, has been appointed by Mr. LeBlanc to fulfill this role. Appointments to the Appeal Board will normally be for a two year period, however, to provide continuity both Sam Larden and Martin Eriksen have been appointed for three years.

The Minister has appointed W.R. (Rod) Hourston, the Departmental representative, to act as the Chairman/ Secretary of the Board. The Departmental representative participates in all Board meetings, but does not have a vote on the recommendation that the Board makes to the Minister.

Top priority for consideration by the Appeal Board members are those fishermen who claim to have grounds to fish halibut off the coast of Alaska this year, under the terms of the Canada-U.S. agreement. Also, there are a large number of appeals from fishermen who feel they qualify for an "L" licence in the newly-restricted halibut fishery although they didn't meet the landing requirements.

Of the appeals presently awaiting the Minister's decision, another large number are "B" boat operators who want licences extended and appellants who feel they should have a new "C" licence, despite the moratorium.

The only change in procedure that will go into effect with the establishment of this new Board is that appellants wishing to appeal licencing decisions to the Minister should now write to the Minister of Fisheries & Oceans, c/o Pacific Region Licence Appeal Board, Fisheries & Oceans, 1090 West Pender Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6E 2P1. When submitting an appeal, fishermen should include any supporting documentation that they wish the Board to consider. Fishermen will also be given the opportunity of appearing before the Board if they so wish. The new Board will be acting on behalf of the Minister, i.e. as part of the final appeal process, and as such will not be replacing the pre-existing departmental Licence Committee or the Licence Appeal Committee, through which decisions and appeals must still pass.

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Lingcod Catch Rate Shows Decline

Most fishermen involved in the groundfish fishery are aware that staff of the Pacific Biological Station and managers from Vancouver conduct annual meetings in Prince Rupert and Vancouver to review the condition of stocks and discuss regulations that may appear necessary as a result of the state of a particular stock. This year we indicated that one of our concerns was the condition of lingcod stocks, particularly in the Strait of Georgia. Subsequent discussions with fishermen indicated that most fishermen were even more concerned than the scientists that lingcod stocks in many areas were not in particularly good shape. Unfortunately, some lingcod fishermen were not notified of these meetings and, to ensure that everyone is aware of the basis for our concern, we have summarized our stock assessments for lingcod including the preliminary results of a recent questionnaire sent to approximately 3,000 commercial and sports fishermen and SCUBA divers utilizing lingcod stocks in the Strait of Georgia.

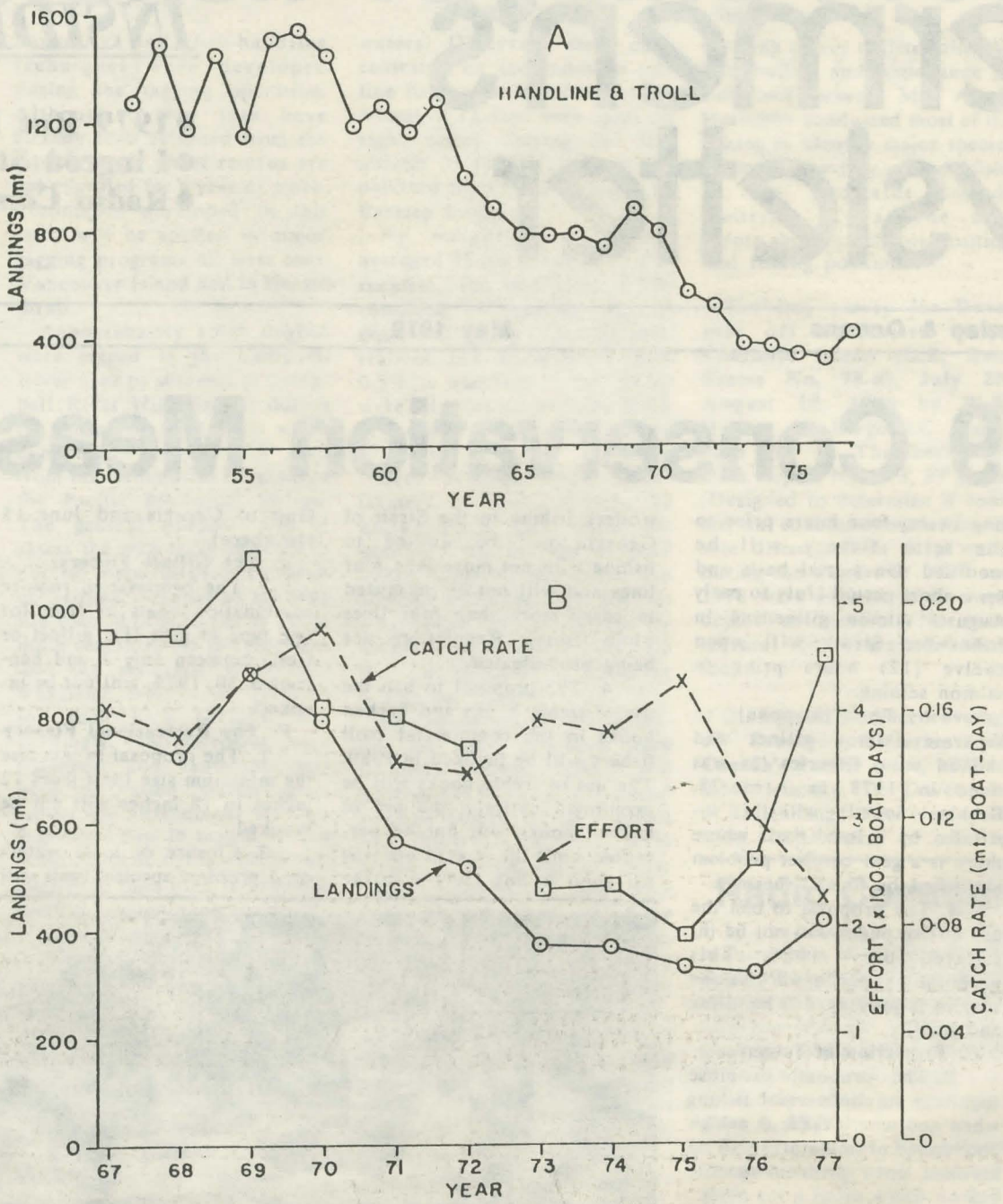
Successful management of groundfish stocks on the west coast requires the cooperation of fishermen and their support is being actively solicited. If anyone feels there are areas of cooperation that have been neglected, please pass on your suggestions to our port samplers or to any biologist on the Groundfish Program staff.

Over its long history, dating from the early years of this century, the commercial fishery for lingcod has evolved from a traditional line fishery to a trawl-oriented fishery in most areas. However, the bulk of the lingcod landed from the sheltered inside waters around Vancouver Island is still caught by line gear. Catches by handline and troll vessels in the Strait of Georgia, including Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait have undergone a 70% decline from pre-1962 levels. This is shown in Part A of the accompanying graph. Since 1967 the amount of fishing effort directed at lingcod by handline/troll vessels has been available from sales slip records. The decline in landings from handline/troll vessels was paralleled by a decline in the amount of fishing effort during 1967-1975. This is shown in Part B of the graph and suggests the drop in landings during this period resulted from a reduction in the amount of handline/troll effort. After 1975 effort increased, however catch rates dropped, reaching a record low in 1977. The reason(s) for the decline in handline/troll landings prior to 1967 are difficult to explain using sales slip information, because of the problems associated with determining the amount of effort directed at lingcod. In an attempt to provide an additional assessment of the condition of the lingcod stocks, a survey of commercial line and recreational fishermen, including SCUBA divers, was conducted in February 1979. The preliminary results indicate that of the fishermen who fished lingcod intentionally in the Strait of Georgia area for five or more years, 73% feel lingcod stocks have declined. Of the fishermen who fished lingcod intentionally for ten or more years, 82% feel stocks have declined.

Over-fishing is suspected of being a primary cause of stock depletion, but just how much each type of fishing gear contributes to over-fishing is uncertain. Handlining and trolling may not contribute to over-fishing as much as other fishing methods. Trawling, on the other hand, may be more important than previously expected and is suspected of fishing down stocks in certain areas. Sport and SCUBA catches of lingcod at present can only be estimated, however removals by these groups may be important, particularly in easily accessible areas. SCUBA divers are particularly effective at catching lingcod. Other factors contributing to a decline in lingcod stocks may be environmentally related. For example, unexplained fluctuations in year-class abundance produce periods of varying recruitment to the fishery. It is uncertain just how much of the decline is related to natural causes.

The timing of the winter fishing closure prior to 1979 appears to be based on little experimental evidence. Recent studies indicate the pre-spawning aggregation of lingcod begins in November. Spawning occurs in January and February and the nesting period extends to mid-June. The peak hatching period occurs in March. Starting in November with the pre-spawning aggregation and lasting until hatching is completed, male lingcod assume a territorial behaviour pattern that makes them highly vulnerable to fishing. The presence of the male during incubation is absolutely essential for the survival of the nest and consequently forms a primary basis for maintaining lingcod stocks.

It is important to realize that landings from the line fishery have declined in Puget Sound and the San Juan area of the Strait of Georgia. A decline in lingcod catch rates by trolling vessels has also occurred in Puget Sound. Because of the drastic decline in lingcod catches in Puget Sound a year-round closure on all lingcod fishing has been imposed. Because events to the immediate south of us are often an indication of what might be expected in our waters and because of the drastic decline in the commercial landings we have recommended that some immediate conservation measures be implemented so that our fishermen may not be faced with total closures a few years from now. In summary, an extension of the winter fishing closure was recommended for the inside waters of Vancouver Island to provide greater protection during the spawning and nesting period and to reduce the catch in an attempt to rebuild stocks or at least to prevent a continued decline in landings. A study is also being initiated to conduct fish plankton studies during April and May in key areas of the Strait of Georgia in an attempt to assess the impact of these conservation measures by predicting lingcod stock size before the fish enter the fishery.



Lingcod catch statistics for the Strait of Georgia and vicinity (Area 4B) showing (A) handline/troll landings for 1950-77 and (B) handline/troll landings, effort and catch rates for 1967-77.

Management Note

Areas 11 to 20 (including Area 28 and District 1) opened to lingcod fishing at midnight April 14, 1979.

This action reduced the previously-announced closed period by two weeks and was taken to lessen the disruption of the line fishery for lingcod.

As the lingcod stocks are badly depressed, the December 1 closed period may be advanced to November 1, 1979. In order to improve on stock information a voluntary log book system will be available from Dr. D. Beamish of the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo.

Relocation Plan For Halibut Fishermen

Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport Iona Campagnolo has announced, on behalf of Fisheries and Oceans Minister Romeo LeBlanc, that the Treasury Board has approved a relocation assistance plan for Canadian fishermen affected by the phase-out of halibut fishing off the coast of Alaska.

This assistance plan was developed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in relation to the signing of two Pacific coast fisheries agreements with the United States on March 29. The two Pacific coast Agreements include a Protocol amending the Pacific Halibut Convention which will permit continued Canadian access to the halibut fishery off the coast of Alaska for the next two years and an Exchange of Notes giving the United States access to groundfish off British Columbia for a similar period.

Mrs. Campagnolo said that without the agreements, Canadian fishermen on the Pacific coast would not have been allowed to continue their traditional and important halibut fishery off Alaska.

Prior to the signing of these two agreements, discussions were held with the affected vessel owners to determine how best to minimize the economic impact on these fishermen. This consultation with fishermen resulted in the development of the relocation assistance plan. Various options will be available to aid in the transition to full dependency on fisheries in Canadian waters. A review board of fishermen will assist in the implementation of the plan.

Mrs. Campagnolo said she, as well as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, welcomed the signing of the two agreements.

"There was no easy solution to this problem but we are satisfied that the terms of the agreements coupled with the relocation assistance plan adequately protect the interests of Canadian fishermen," she added.

Coming Up

Joint meeting of the Shellfish Institute of North America (S.I.N.A.) and the National Shellfisheries Association (N.S.A.) — June 23 to 28, Bayshore Inn, Vancouver.

Pacific Regional Fisheries Advisory Council meeting, May 14 - Holiday Inn, Vancouver.

Staff Appointments—

Pacific Region Fisheries

Ed (E.R.) Zyblut, formerly senior biologist for North and Central Coast Division, has been appointed chief of that division. Mr. Zyblut will be located in Prince Rupert during peak fishing periods and in Vancouver the rest of the year.

Alan Gibson has been appointed Chief, Management Services Division, Field Services Branch. Mr. Gibson will assume direct control over most of the staff functions of the branch such as regulations and enforcement, licencing and staff training. A major part of the duties will be acting on behalf of the Director, J.R. MacLeod, in dealings with the fishing industry, other resource user groups and other agencies.

Garnet Jones succeeds Mr. Gibson as Chief, South Coast Division (area of responsibility includes the west coast of Vancouver Island and Johnstone and Georgia Straits). He formerly held the same position in the Fraser River - Yukon Division.

Dave (D.C.) Schutz assumes senior biologist duties for the South Coast Division in May. He has, for the past two years, been acting division chief of the north and central coast area.

Don (D.A.) Anderson is taking over from Ed Zyblut as senior biologist for the North and Central Coast Division. Mr. Anderson has been working as senior biologist for the south coast division since last summer.

1979 Herring Roe Fishery

The 1979 herring roe fishery took place from February 12 to April 1.

In all, approximately 42,800 tons of herring were taken, yielding about 4,700 tons of herring roe.

The number of fishing companies involved in processing roe herring has increased 20% since last year, to 53, and the number of processing facilities has increased 25%, to 74. Many plants froze the product initially, then thawed it to correspond to plant processing capacity. This resulted in less people being employed in the plants this year, but for longer periods of time. There was very little incidence of gluts developing in the plants which could have resulted in poor product.

Prices paid to fishermen far exceeded any in the past, with buyers paying them in total about $130 million.

Although it was the intention of Fisheries Service to manage the fishery for 55% seine catch and 45% gillnet catch, the fact that this is exactly the final gear split based on hailed catch figures, can probably be attributed as much to chance as to design, given the unusual nature of this year's fishery.

The total stock size in 1979 had been predicted to be lower than in recent years. This lower stock size is due to the large numbers of progeny from 1971 and 1972 spawnings approaching the end of their life span, leaving the progeny of the 1975 spawning as the only strong year-class in most stocks. Herring stocks are subject to large fluctuations in abundance because of variable natural mortality rates.

Fisheries Service had predicted a catch of 59,300 tons. This total was not reached mainly because recruitment from the 1976 spawning appears to be lower than average (herring normally spawn for the first time at age 3). Also, this year, the migrating stocks exhibited very unusual timing and behaviour patterns.

Spawn deposited this year generally looks satisfactory, although there are some weak spots. In addition to surface observations for spawn, this year scuba divers were hired to search eel grass and kelp beds to augment these observations and to evaluate new herring spawn deposition survey techniques.

On the west coast of Vancouver Island, the Barkley Sound area has had good spawning reported. Very good spawning has occurred in the Vargas Island-Yellowbank areas of Clayoquot Sound. However, no spawning has taken place in Bawden Bay, White Pine Cove or Sidney Inlet and only below average spawning has been observed in Hesquiat Harbour. No spawning has occurred inside Nootka Sound although an average spawn deposition has taken place around Nuchatlitz and better than average spawning has occurred at Bajo Reef. In the Quatsino Sound area, spawning appears to be very good.

In the Gulf of Georgia overall spawning appears to be adequate, although below average spawning has taken place in the Nanoose Bay to Dodds Narrows area. In the Yellow Point/Thetis Island area, spawning has been fair. In general, better spawning has occurred in the northern part of the Gulf (e.g. Denman and Hornby Islands) and poorer spawning in the southern end (e.g. Ganges/Long Harbour), although some improvement in the south was observed.

No fishing for roe herring took place this year in the central coast area and indications are that spawning requirements will not be met.

On the north coast no fisheries were predicted around the Prince Rupert area due to poor stock size. Indications are that there is adequate spawn in the Port Simpson area. Twenty-eight hundred tons were taken from Kitkatla Inlet and there appears to be adequate spawning. Generally though, spawning in the north coast area is below requirements.

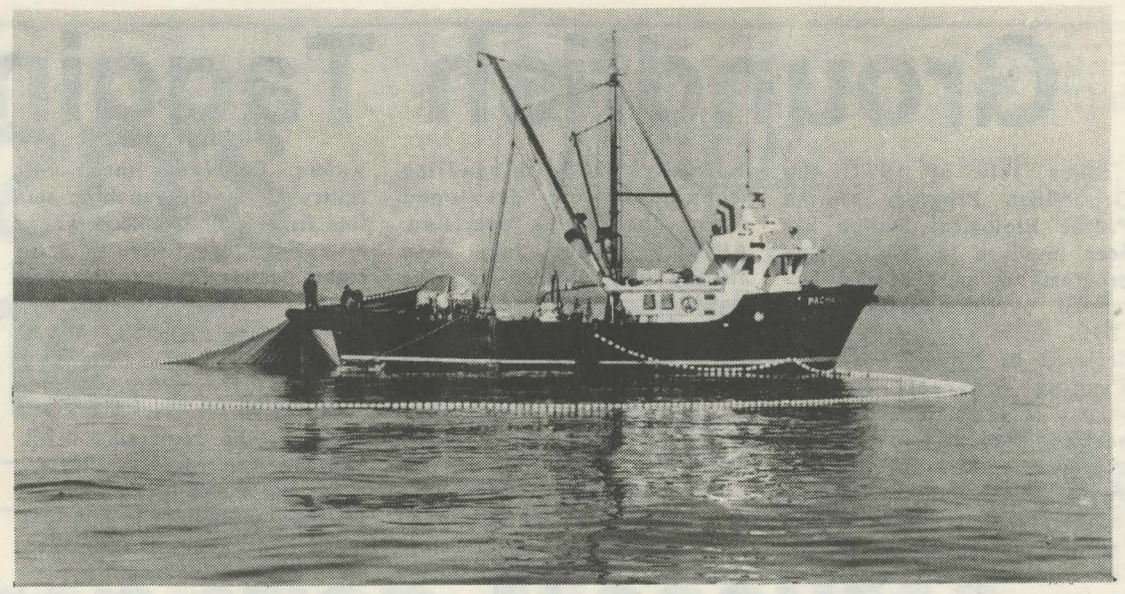
Skincuttle Inlet, on the east coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands, provided a catch of 10,000 tons and spawning appears to be on the light side. No fishery took place in Louscoone Inlet on the Charlottes' west coast and it appears that average spawning has occurred. Spawning is still in progress (end of April) in Cumshewa Inlet.

With about 1,300 gillnets and 250 seine boats licenced to fish for roe herring coast-wide, gear concentrations were a problem. In fact, if the fleet size had not been as large in some areas, small fisheries for limited amounts of herring may have been considered. However, with too many boats, the risk of overexploitation was too great.

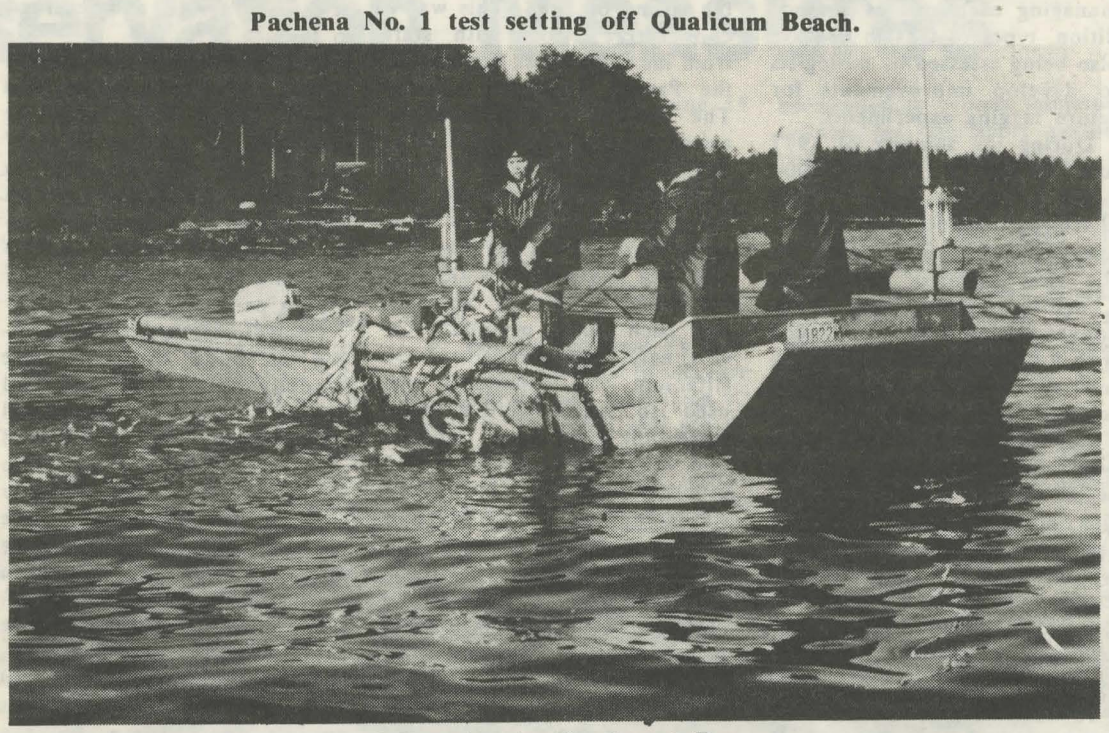
Sixty-six charges have been laid against fishermen for violations against the B.C. Fishery Regulations, 29 of them in the Gulf. Special Fisheries Service enforcement teams that followed the fleet from area to area laid most of the charges against gillnet fishermen who had nets in the water during a closed time and against fishermen who did not have personal fishing licences.

There was also some incidence of lost and/or stolen herring licence validations and two sets of counterfeit validation tabs that resulted in charges. Over $500,000 worth of herring was seized by Fishery Officers from fishermen charged with illegal activity, pending court action. Abandoned gillnets were a serious problem in some areas. For example, in the Hecate Bay/Yellowbank area of Clayoquot Sound, 31 illegal nets were pulled out of the water containing everything from lingcod to geoducks to rotten herring. This problem was also evident in other areas.

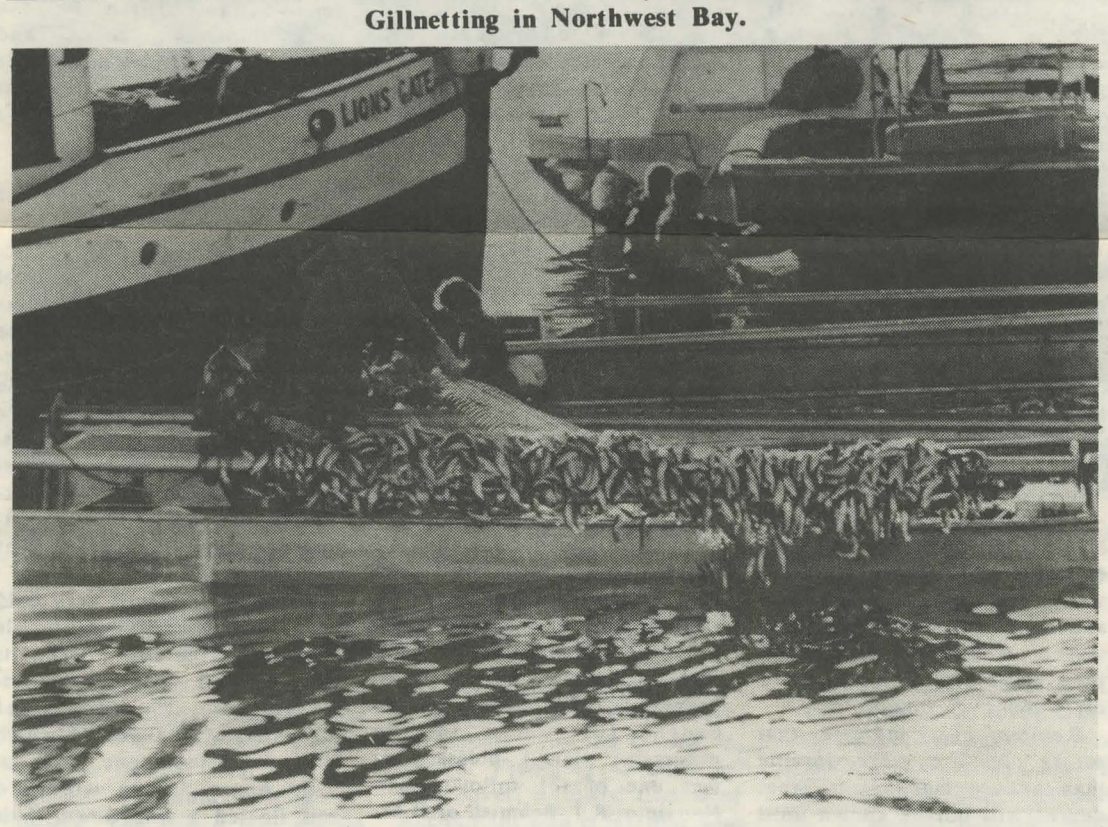
The number of search and rescue incidents rose by about 25% from last year, to over 100; these included distress calls, vessels running aground and vessels being reported overdue. Comparatively good weather for most of March probably contributed to the fact that there were fewer serious incidents this year.



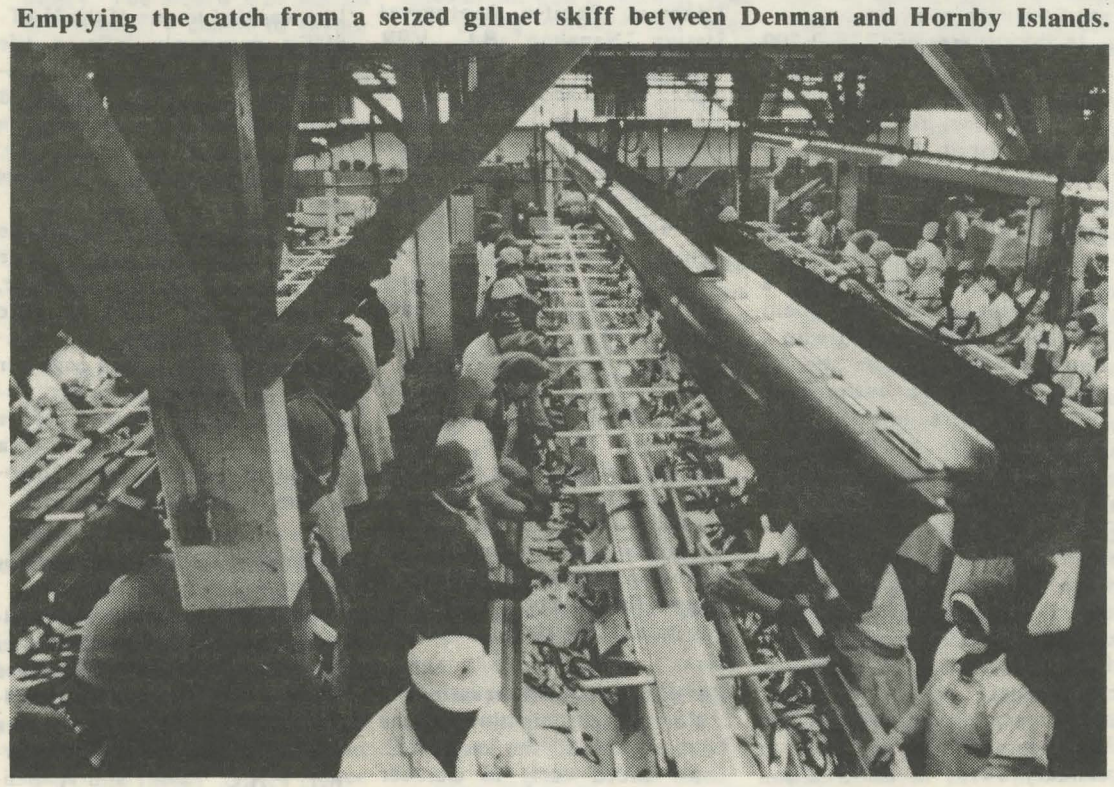
Pachena No. 1 test setting off Qualicum Beach.



Gillnetting in Northwest Bay.



Emptying the catch from a seized gillnet skiff between Denman and Hornby Islands.

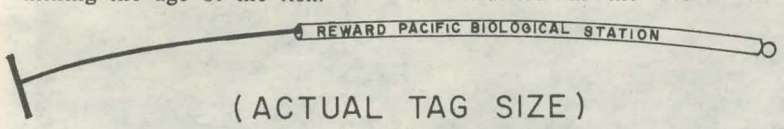


Picking herring at B.C. Packers Imperial Plant.

Groundfish Tagging Programs

Since July of 1977, the Groundfish Program at the Pacific Biological Station has been involved in four tagging programs as part of the Extended Jurisdiction Program (200 mile economic zone declared in January of 1977). Tagging programs have a variety of goals: differentiating between stocks; identifying migration patterns; assisting in development of aging techniques; determining growth rates of marine fishes. All this information will assist in managing each species. In addition, types of tags in use are also being assessed by biologists to develop improvements for future tagging experiments.

During the summer of 1977 and spring of 1978, 20,000 blackcod were tagged from chartered blackcod trap vessels: approximately 10,000 each off the west coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island. Fish were tagged with a monofilament anchor tag over which a three-inch piece of yellow vinyl tubing with information printed on two sides was secured. The tags were inserted through a needle into the fish back just forward and below the first dorsal fin; the T-shaped nylon "heads" would then become anchored between the dorsal fin extensions above the fish backbone. All species were tagged in the same general area. Every tenth blackcod was double-tagged with a similar piece of vinyl tubing attached with a more flexible nylon monofilament, sewn through the body below the first dorsal fin as a test of the most durable tag type. In addition, approximately 15,000 fish were injected with a harmless chemical called oxytetracycline, which leaves a mark on bone that can be seen under ultra-violet light. This mark is used to assist in determining the age of the fish.



(ACTUAL TAG SIZE)

The purpose was to determine migration patterns (if any existed). Preliminary returns show both a northern and southern migration of fish tagged off west coast Q.C.I. but little movement of those tagged off Vancouver Island.

Returns also indicate that suture tags are more durable than anchor tags but to what degree will not be known until more returns come in.

In the summer of 1978, 3,700 juvenile and adult lingcod were tagged along the southwest coast of Vancouver Island and in southern Strait of Georgia to determine the boundaries of fish concentrations for management purposes (i.e., are they separate stocks or do they mix?). All the lingcod were tagged with a yellow Floy anchor tag; about 10% were double-tagged with a suture tag to evaluate the effectiveness of the anchor tag; and 73% were injected with oxytetracycline to test aging techniques. To date, tag returns from this experiment have not been sufficient to make an assessment.

In the third program, a pilot study was initiated in Georgia Strait to develop techniques for tagging juvenile Pacific cod. Approximately 1,000 juvenile (1 and 2 year old) fish were tagged in January of 1978 and 1,100 in January 1979, in the Swanson and Trincomali Channel areas. Tag retention, post-tagging and mortality and fish-handling techniques were developed during the tagging operation. Although a few tags have already been returned from the tagging areas, most returns are not expected for a year or more. Techniques developed in this study will be applied in major tagging programs off west coast Vancouver Island and in Hecate Strait.

Approximately 1,800 dogfish were tagged in the Campbell River area by students of Campbell River High School during the spring of 1978. This was a cooperative effort with staff from the Groundfish Program of the Pacific Biological Station. The general purpose was to assess the migration patterns of dogfish found in northern Strait of Georgia. Because of the long life span of dogfish (up to 60 or more years), it was felt that normal tag materials would not withstand erosion or abrasion for such long periods. Accordingly, anti-corrosive wire (titanium and tantalum) was used to fasten yellow discs below the first dorsal fin. All fish were double tagged with a monofilament nylon anchor tag similar to ones used in previous dogfish tagging experiments.

To date, 16 tags have been returned from the 1978 experiment; only two less than the three previous years combined when a similar number of fish were tagged each year in the same area using a monofilament tag only. Of the 16 tags returned from the 1978 experiment, six were missing (both confirmed and unconfirmed) the monofilament second tag indicating a significant loss of these tags which might account for the poor rate of return from the earlier years.

It is most important that all tagged specimens of blackcod, lingcod, Pacific cod and dogfish be returned in the **round** as soon as possible after recapture. It is equally important that we obtain information on date, area, depth and gear used for recaptured specimens if we are to obtain greatest benefit from these important and expensive programs. When tagged fish are caught (or found in the processing plants) please contact one of the following: in Nanaimo, R.J. Beamish or B.M. Leaman, Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5K6, or telephone (collect) 758-5202; in Vancouver, Nevill Venable, Room 22 - 975 Centennial Avenue, Campbell Avenue Fish Docks, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1A3, or telephone (collect) 254-4144; and in Prince Rupert, Fred Nolte, Room 117, Federal Building, 417 - 2nd Avenue West, Prince Rupert, B.C. V8J 1G8, or telephone (collect) 624-5356.

A reward is offered for the return of all tags from these programs, but, again the importance of receiving the whole fish complete with the recovery information described above cannot be over-emphasized. In addition, those returning a tagged fish will be compensated for its market value if they wish.

Foreign Vessel Observations

Foreign participation in the hake fishery off the south B.C. coast ended early in October when the Polish vessel "CRATER" departed our waters. Observers then concentrated on the Japanese setline fishery for blackcod where a total of 72 days were spent on eight vessels during the last quarter of 1978. Coverage was obtained from Cape St. James to Barkley Sound.

By weight, the catches averaged 95.8% blackcod, 2.4% rockfish, the remaining 1.8% consisted of dogfish, turbot, skate and traces of Pacific cod. Halibut, amounting to less than 0.5% in numbers of fish taken, were all released from the hook at the ship's side, and returned to the sea.

Sets averaged 400 hachi (skates) of approximately 50 hooks each and each set produced an average of 6.27 metric tons of blackcod. An average of 2,614 fish per set were caught with an average individual weight of 2.4 kg (5.3 lb.); one fish per 7.5 hooks or 0.3 kg per hook.

Immediately after being landed on deck, blackcod were headed, gutted, washed and packed, all by hand, into metal trays or moulds and then placed in a sharp freezer within three hours of being caught. After eight to ten hours they were removed and taken out of the moulds, glazed and stowed in the freezer hold. Rockfish, even the smallest, were given the same treatment, and occasionally turbot, dogfish and skate. Ripe blackcod roe was removed and frozen and, on some ships, the "collar" and pelvic fins were cut in a single piece from the head, and either frozen or grilled in the ship's galley.

Tragedy at Sea

On December 17, 1978, the longliner HATSUE MARU No. 55 was hauling her gear south of Cape St. James when an explosion and fire erupted in the ship's engine room. It was immediately out of control and the accommodation spaces were quickly engulfed in flames, preventing the crew and observer, who were working forward in the fish room, from getting any of their personal gear or extra clothing.

Seven anxious and very cold hours were spent on the foc'sle head while the fire worked its way forward. Rescue was affected by the longliner RYUSHO MARU No. 18 which arrived on the scene at about 2200 hours, lay to windward and floated a line down. This line was tied to one of the HATSUE's previously inflated life rafts and the crew of 29 (including a badly-burned engineer) plus the observer were hauled across in three trips. Wind was northwest at 30 knots and the sea rough.

The long wait for help and the rescue itself appeared routine because of the confidence, training and skill of the Japanese fishermen. Unfortunately, the injured engineer died 12 hours after the explosion; four hours before daylight would have permitted a Canadian Coast Guard helicopter to airlift him to hospital.

New Groundfish Publications Available

Midwater trawl tows and catches made on Arctic Harvester Cruise 78-1 and G.B. Reed Cruise 78-1 (January 24-February 10, 1978), Queen Charlotte Sound by L.W. Barner, F.H.C. Taylor and A. Bennett; FMS Data Report No. 106, 37 pages. (An acoustic and trawling survey to determine the distribution and abundance of fish stocks present. M/V Arctic Harvester conducted most of the fishing to identify major species (primarily herring and rockfish) in the midwater sound-scattering layers. The data report shows catch composition and fishing positions.)

Trawling survey for Dover sole off northwest Queen Charlotte Island (G.B. Reed Cruise No. 78-6), July 28-August 10, 1978 by W.R. Harling, J.J. Fargo, J.C. Blackburn and A. Thieffrey; FMS Data Report No. 113; 27 pages. (Designed to determine if commercial concentrations of Dover sole discovered in deep water during the winters of 1977 and 1978 were present at the same depths in summer. No commercial concentrations were found.)

Biological observer coverage of foreign fisheries off Canada's Pacific coast, 1977 by B.M. Leaman, D. Davenport, W.R. Harling, D.A. Nagtegaal, W.A. Ostermann, J.F. Selsby and G.A. Thomas; FMS Data Report No. 99, 33 pages and 15 reports. (This four-volume report presents the results of biological observations made on foreign vessels operating in Canadian waters during 1977. Included in the report are: a review of rockfish, hake, dogfish and blackcod fishing by nation; a review of observer coverage of these fisheries; estimates of the incidence of prohibited species in foreign fisheries; and a summary of biological sampling conducted. Vol. 1 contains the above plus a map of general fishing positions and catches by vessel: Vol. 2-4 contain individual observer reports.)

Freeport Groundfish Cruise No. 78-1 (July 21-August 11, 1978) by W. Shaw, R.M. Wallis, F.W. Mottl and S.J. Westrheim; FMS Data Report No. 112, 34 pages. (A joint Canada-U.S. survey of groundfish stocks in Dixon Entrance and off southeast Alaska fishing a predetermined grid pattern. Very few hauls contained commercial quantities of fish.)

Radio Communication Change

In accordance with the requirements of the Ship Station Radio Regulations and in the interest of providing an effective communication network coverage to the fishing fleet, the following radio-telephone procedures shall go into effect **June 1, 1979**.

Department of Fisheries & Oceans' vessels shall normally maintain a radio watch on 2182 kHz and on VHF Channels 16 and 77 during working hours. Whenever possible they will also maintain radio watch on 2318. They will no longer continue the practice of monitoring VHF 06, VHF 08, and a GRS channel.

As soon as communication has been established on either 2182 or Channel 16, a change must be made to a mutually-agreed working frequency and all further communication pertaining to that call shall be made on that frequency.

Fisheries' patrol vessel announcements to the fleet will be broadcast simultaneously on 2318 kHz in compatible mode (2.8A3H) and on Channel 77 VHF-FM.

All vessels are reminded of the universal requirement to maintain the radio silence periods on the hour until three minutes past and on the half hour until 33 minutes past on 2182 kHz.

Departmental vessels shall no longer maintain radio watch on General Radio Service (Citizens Band); nor will Fisheries' announcements be made on this band.

Sportsman Fined $1,000

Peter Arne Brown ended up paying over $10 a piece for the abalone he harvested on April 1st.

At Cattle Point on Victoria's waterfront he was apprehended by Fishery Officer Larry Huber and charged with exceeding the daily bag limit of abalone (12.) Mr. Brown was in possession of 86 abalone at the time of apprehension.

Judge Allen of the Provincial Court heard a guilty plea and fined the accused $1,000; Mr. Brown also forfeited his diving gear — tank, wet suit and regulator.

New Department Proclaimed

The Department of Fisheries & Oceans is now a reality — as of April 2, 1979. The Honourable Romeo LeBlanc was sworn in the same day as the first Minister of the Department of Fisheries & Oceans.

Chairman of Prices Support Board Appointed

Mr. Aidan Maloney has been appointed as Chairman of the Fisheries Prices Support Board. He will also serve as Special Advisor on Fisheries Development to the Newfoundland Regional Director-General of Fisheries, L.J. Cowley.

Licencing Reminder

Office Hours

The Licence Section is open to the public for issuance of commercial licences from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. From 3 to 4 p.m. only mail applications are processed by Licencing staff.

Packers and Cash Buyers

Packing vessels require valid "D" tabs to be affixed to the C.F.V. registration plate. Those packers purchasing fish products also require a Cash Buyer's licence. A Cash Buyer's licence is available upon application from the Marine Resources Branch, Department of Environment, No. 200 - 1019 Wharf Street, Victoria, B.C., telephone 387-1537.

Transfer of Ownership

All transfers of ownership of commercial vessels will be recorded within 30 days of the transaction upon receipt of the following: 1. Record of Transfer of a Commercially Licenced Fishing Vessel - Form F-3458; and 2. A copy of the Bill of Sale.

A Bill of Sale is now required to ensure the legitimacy of the Record of Transfer form.

The Record of Transfer form must be signed by the seller and the purchaser unless an individual has been assigned Power of Attorney.

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