

The world shortages of fish and fish products have inevitably led to increases in prices of the raw material and of the finished products. In general, the position of the fisherman has improved because his prices have risen more than his costs and there are fewer to share the return from the production, which has remained fairly constant. The position of the processor is also more secure since, on the one hand, the risks normal to export trade have in many instances been removed by Government contracts and other arrangements which assure him firm prices throughout the producing season and, on the other hand, he has the knowledge that the only brake upon the upward trend in prices is the presence of Government ceilings.

This removal of the risk of loss in the export markets has made for the emergence of new exporters who were formerly restrained by lack of capital or by lack of experience in such markets. Since there is, in general, no increase in the amount of fish available for export, competition between those who desire to export it increases as they become more numerous. This has been one of the principal influences in keeping up the prices to fishermen, a condition which has made unnecessary the device of production bonuses or subsidies. Indeed, it may be doubted whether increase in price would lead to significant increase in production, which, if it is necessary, will require the movement of fairly large volumes of capital into the industry in the form of increased shore facilities and equipment for more modern methods of fishing.

Summary of War-Time Controls re Fisheries.—Apart from the Government controls over labour, finance and transport, as they apply to most industries, additional ones are operative in the fishing industry and are applied by the Department of Fisheries and the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. The latter has now established price ceilings on most kinds of fish sold in Canada and has put under export control certain cures of fish, particularly fresh and frozen, in order to assure adequate supplies for the home market. The Department of Fisheries, on the other hand, is responsible for the controls designed to direct predetermined amounts of canned salmon and canned herring to the United Kingdom, to other markets, and to Government agencies, or to the Red Cross. The Department of Fisheries also administers the international allocations of salted fish that are recommended by the Combined Food Board and insures that Canadian supplies of salted fish are directed to those markets the Board considers most needy. In addition, the Department is responsible for arranging the flow of frozen fillets to the United Kingdom.

Section 4.—The Modern Fishing Industry*

Subsection 1.—Primary Production

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw the commencement of expansion in the commercial fishing industry of Canada. In 1844 the estimated value of the catch was only \$125,000. It doubled in the following decade and by 1860 had passed the million-dollar mark. Ten years later it reached \$6,000,000 and this was again more than doubled by 1878. By 1900 it had reached almost \$22,000,000 and the growth continued with little interruption until 1918, when it reached \$60,000,000. From 1918 until 1940 there were decreases in value, due to lower prices rather than to smaller catches. Production in 1941 surpassed the 1918 level and 1942 showed an increase over 1941 of 20.6 p.c. The figures given represent the total value of fish as marketed, whether in a fresh, dried, canned or otherwise prepared state.

* Revised by the Fisheries and Animal Products Branch, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. For a list of the publications of this Branch, see Chapter XXX.