

leased at an annual rental of 14s. per acre per annum and the rental received is handed to the Maoris. If the land was taken for the purpose of establishing a fishermen's reserve it would not injuriously affect the Maoris so long as they got the money at present received from the Government. The suggestion was that the commonage should be cut up into $\frac{1}{2}$ acre sections and leased to the fishermen so that they could get assistance to build decent cottages. Some of the premises occupied by the fishermen were inspected, and although kept as clean as the circumstances will permit are mere hovels.

Recommendations.

French Pass.

1. That the Government provide a suitable fishermen's reserve in the vicinity of French Pass.

Kaikoura.

2. That if the present fishermen's reserve at Kaikoura is unsuitable, either because of the poor landing or for want of permanent road access, the Government should give favourable consideration to the allotment of a more suitable reserve or examine the practicability of keeping the present temporary road open for all time.

Lake Ellesmere.

3. That provision be made for a suitable reserve for the fishermen at Taumutu (Lake Ellesmere).

SUNDAY SALE OF FISH.

New Plymouth.

At New Plymouth the main cause of complaint by fishermen was that the police had recently prevented the sale of fish at the Breakwater on Sunday. All the fishermen and the local authorities were in favour of such sale being permitted. Mr. S. G. Smith, M.P. for New Plymouth, who interviewed the members of the Committee, gave strong support to the fishermen in the presentation of their case.

At first there was considerable doubt as to who was responsible for the stoppage of these sales, the local bodies, Marine Department, and police being blamed in turn. Investigation showed that action had been taken by the police after complaint had been laid under section 18 of the Police Offences Act.

At this port a large number of people, including many from rural areas, visit the Breakwater on Sundays, and they appreciate the opportunity to buy fresh fish at a reasonable price. In addition, during the summer the Railways Department runs excursion trains from the country districts to the port, and many of these country excursionists, who normally are unable to buy fresh fish at all, welcome this means of being able to procure a healthy change in their diet.

This practice of selling fish at the Breakwater when the vessels return from Sunday fishing has been in vogue in New Plymouth for years, as at nearly every other port in New Zealand, and this is the only place where the law has been invoked to prevent the sales. A great part of the livelihood of these men depends on these Sunday sales, and as many of their customers are people coming from outside New Plymouth the trade cannot very much affect the local retailers. Further, out of the eight local retailers only one runs a straight-out wet-fish shop, all the other being in the main fried-fish shops or restaurants. While the Committee admits that any decision allowing the continuance of these sales will open up the whole difficult question of Sunday trading, we consider that it is in the interests of the fishermen and the general public that the sale of fresh fish from licensed fishing-boats should be permitted on Sundays.

The fishermen in New Plymouth lead a precarious existence, and the earning of their livelihood is affected by storms and other acts of God, so that any alleviation possible should be granted.

In the country districts the distribution of fish is so bad as to be practically negligible, and as fish is a valuable food every opportunity should be given country dwellers to procure fresh fish at reasonable prices when they are able to visit the fishing ports.

Recommendation.

1. That the sale of fresh fish from licensed fishing-boats be permitted on Sundays, the necessary adjustments to the Police Offences Act to be made so as to exempt the sale of fish, on condition that the fish must be sold from the licensed vessel or her tender.

DESTRUCTION OF FISH BY EXPLOSIVES.

Bay of Islands.

At Russell and elsewhere in the North a considerable number of witnesses complained of the prevalence of dynamiting for bait on the coast. Places at which this practice appear to be most common are off Cape Brett, and at Matauri Bay, Whangaroa, and the Cavalli Islands. It was admitted that this offence was very hard to detect, but witnesses favoured the appointment of honorary Inspectors, the issue of instructions to the lightkeepers at Cape Brett to report vessels seen using explosives, the tightening-up of the regulations covering the issue or sale of explosives, and suitable publicity of a type likely to educate the fishermen and public with the object of gaining their assistance in putting down this reprehensible practice. It is well known that the use of explosives causes excessive wastage of fish, far more being killed than are ever picked up, and on crayfishing grounds the results are disastrous in that the shock destroys very large numbers of this variety.