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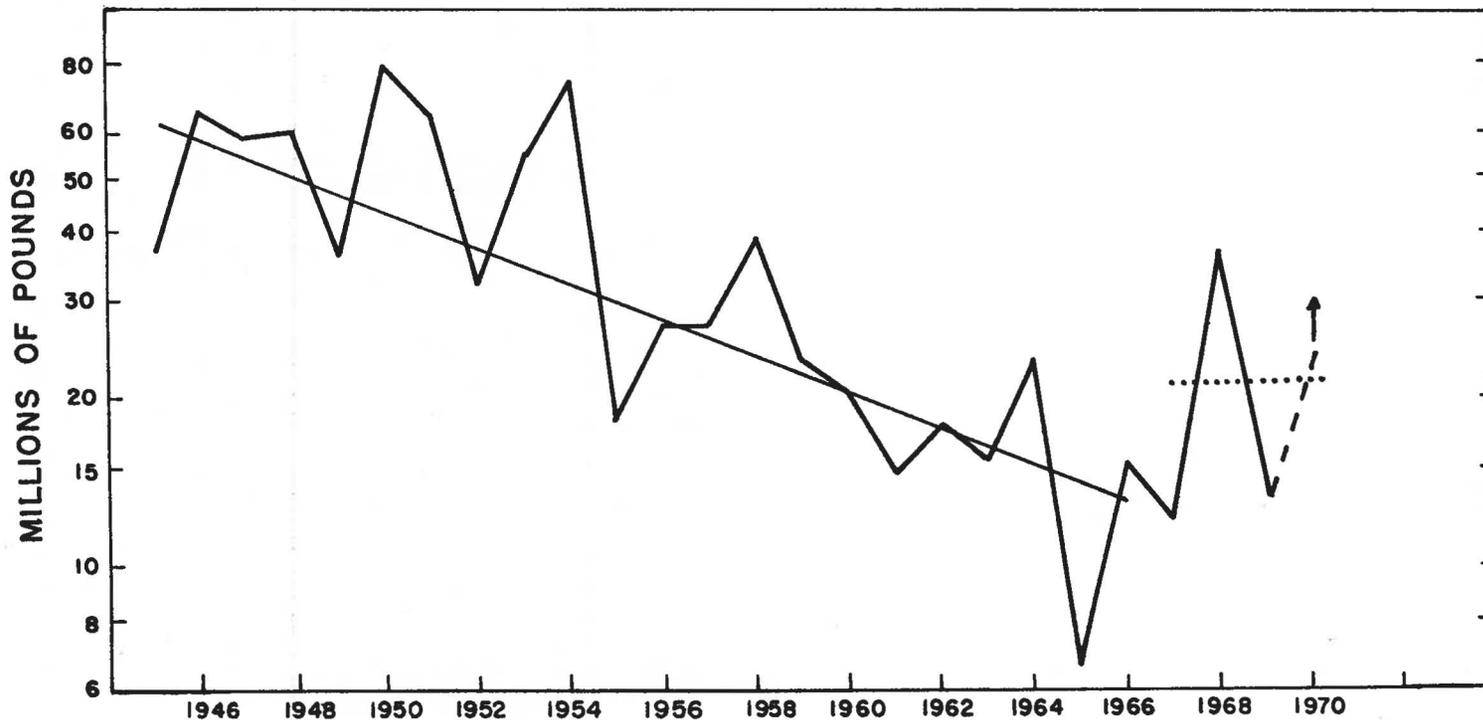
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CANADIAN COMMENTS ON INPFC DOCUMENT 1251 (JAPAN)
REGARDING STATUS OF CANADIAN SALMON STOCKS

INPFC Doc. 997 (Canada) provided information on changes in fisheries and in condition of British Columbia salmon stocks up to 1966. Prior to the 1971 Annual Meeting, the Canadian section hopes to prepare a new document updating Doc. 997 by providing data for 1967-1970. The new document will contain information bearing on the comments of Japanese scientists presented in INPFC Doc. 1251 (Japan). The present short report provides preliminary information regarding recent trends in Canadian chum salmon stocks.

In INPFC Doc. 1251 (Japan), Japanese scientists requested that Canada provide a scientific explanation for recent unfavourable conditions affecting production of Canadian chum salmon. It is not possible at this time to provide a complete explanation. However it is clear that the levels of spawning escapements during the 1950's and early 1960's (e.g. see Fig. 17 of INPFC Doc. 997) were a major contributing reason for the low levels of production in the decade preceding 1966. Fig. 2 of INPFC Doc. 997 shows a more or less steady decline in British Columbia chum catches from the early 1950's to 1966. In the attached figure, data for 1967-1969 (and incomplete data for 1970--at time of writing the chum salmon fishing season is still in progress) have been added. The graph indicates that the downward trend to 1966 has reversed and that yields in 1968 and 1970 were among the highest in the past 15 years. As will be documented in our forthcoming report, these increases in yield followed a period when chum salmon fisheries were severely restricted in order to build up spawning escapement levels. In our opinion these recent increases in chum salmon stocks which provided the improved catches would not have occurred if severe conservation action had not been taken; increased exploitation in the critical periods of low stock levels would undoubtedly have delayed the recovery of the stocks and indeed might have brought about a further drop in stock levels.

October, 1970.



British Columbia landings of chum salmon (logarithmic presentation). Data for 1970 incomplete, fishing still in progress at time of writing. Trend line for 1945 to 1966 from INPFC Doc. No. 997 (Canada). Horizontal dotted line indicates average catch for 1967 to 1970.