

Hickel Calls for Point To Point Fishing Zones

JUNEAU— Gov. Walter J. Hickel said this week he has ordered a major acceleration of state efforts in

Washington to secure congressional passage of legislation establishing a baseline concept—point-to-point international fishing boundary off the coast of Alaska.

The governor's directive came as a Russian fishing boat skipper waited in Anchorage to face a preliminary hearing in U.S. District Court on a charge that his vessel violated the United States' 12-mile offshore fishing limit last Thursday near Akutan Island on the Aleutian Chain.

The skipper, Captain

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Daniel Baronik, is master of the Soviet trawler SRTM 8-457, the same vessel which, with a different master, was seized by the Coast Guard for a similar violation in March.

Hickel reaffirmed a declaration made Thursday night after the latest boarding, that he believes the SRTM 8-457 and its fishing gear should be confiscated permanently this time, and Baronik should be fined the maximum allowed—\$10,000.00.

But in addition, the governor disclosed that he has been in contact with federal officials in Washington to urge immediate consideration of a point-to-point offshore boundary as a deterrent to future such violations of fishing restrictions.

Hickel said he called on Ambassador Donald L. McKernan, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Fisheries and Wild Life, to back the state's efforts to secure a new 12-mile offshore boundary based on the point-to-point concept.

A point-to-point boundary would differ from the present 12-mile limit in that it would be drawn along coastal baselines in straight lines between peninsulas, across bays and other coastal

irregularities, rather than following exactly the state's jagged 34,000-mile coastline.

"If we can get a point-to-point boundary," Hickel said, "I am convinced we will eliminate problems foreign fishermen sometimes contend they have in trying to calculate whether they are in international or U.S. waters."

Hickel also asserted a point-to-point boundary would "greatly increase the protection given Alaskan coastal waters for Alaska's own fishermen. Such a boundary would bring into U.S. fishing waters such large areas as a good portion of the Bristol Bay and the Cook Inlet near Anchorage."

The governor noted that it is possible at present for foreign fishing vessels to work some distance up into Cook Inlet while still remaining in international waters.

"Establishment of a point-to-point boundary for Alaska would tie in perfectly with long-range plans for the economic development of the North Pacific and would benefit not only Alaska but all of the free world," Hickel said.