

Russian Fishing Captain Fined For Fishing Ground Violation

A Russian fishing captain was fined \$5,000 Monday for fishing in U.S. territorial waters.

And Gov. Walter J. Hickel, displeased with the "measly amount" of the sentence, hinted that state charges might be brought if future violations occur.

Nicolai G. Zernov, captain of the Soviet stern trawler SRTM 8-143, was arrested after the Coast Guard Cutter Storis found the trawler one mile south of Mitrofan Island in the Aleutians on March 2.

Zernov was fined \$5,000 by District Judge James A. von der Hyedt in Anchorage, given two weeks to pay, and returned to his ship. Although he had claimed earlier that he was only repairing nets, he did not

contest the charge.

Governor Hickel complained that the penalty was inadequate, and could easily be paid from the fish caught by a fleet fishing within the territorial waters.

He added that the action broke State as well as Federal law, and could be punished at maximum by forfeiture of the fishing vessel, one-year imprisonment, \$10,000 fine, or any combination of those penalties.

Hickel noted that the U.S. State Department had asked the State not to take legal action against the trawler, and quickly released the vessel into international waters, which kept the State from seizing it.

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Russian . . .

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He said he would discuss the matter with State Department officials in the case of another violation of Alaskan waters by foreign fishing ships. These violations "seem commonplace from the many eyewitness reports we have received," he added.

Hickel also called for additional Coast Guard ships and aircraft to patrol Alaska's 34,000 mile coastline.