

Lieutenant Governor Hits Foreign Fishing for Pirating

Speaking before the Knoxville, Tenn. Chamber of Commerce at a luncheon, Alaska Lt. Gov. H.A. "Red" Boucher accused foreign high seas fisheries of pirating America's food for tomorrow.

"Alaska Governor William A. Egan has called on U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to play a more active role in this long-running conflict," Boucher said, "and I wholeheartedly concur with him."

The Lt. Governor, in Tennessee to address the Tennessee Gas Association at Gatlinburg, said he intends to "seek national support" for an effort to stop the plundering of America's high seas food resources while there is still time to recover them.

Boucher said his special concern with the subject results from more than two decades of fish piracy off the coasts of Alaska by foreign fleets.

"Alaska has been fighting the battle alone," he said. "Alaska simply has not had the support it needs at the national level. What we're heading for is another Icelandic incident."

"Our fish fleet is composed primarily of small, individually owned vessels," he said. "They have been forced to compete with a veritable flotilla of plundering foreign ships."

"Twenty years ago," he continued, "Bristol Bay was Alaska's largest and most productive salmon fishery, supporting up-

wards of 15 canneries.

Today, Bristol Bay is a disaster area with a handful of financially troubled processors and fishermen forced on the welfare rolls in alarming numbers.

"Fleets from several Pacific rim nations travel, self-contained, just off Alaska's shores. They fish, process and ship home the fish that should be in the nets

(Continued on Page 10)

Fish Pirating . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

of Alaskan fishermen," he said.

"We are caught on the seesaw of international politics," Boucher continued, "and it's high time we got off."

"If someone were to move a drilling rig off the continental shelf anywhere in the United States and begin to drill for oil, there would be an international uproar," Boucher said. "This, however, is what these foreign fish pirates have been doing to three generations of Alaskans.

"Ravenously, with no concern for tomorrow, these fleets take all varieties of fish, even those in danger of extinction," he said.

"Because of this overfishing," many varieties of salmon, once abundant in Alaska waters are vanishing," he said further.

"Alaskans do a good job of policing their own natural resources," Boucher said. "We have always been aware of our responsibility to nature. How can we properly manage something we no longer have?"