

YOUR FISH AT STAKE.

Conveyor-belt supply of fish to Grimsby, Hull and Fleetwood may shrink to a trickle if British Trawlers are kept outside Iceland's 12-mile limit. That's the grim prospect facing the great fishing industry and millions of housewives. For the whole of the Iceland catch, cod, halibut, haddock, flat-fish, etc, is eaten in Britain. In the Distant Fishing Industry many millions of pounds are invested, many hundreds of people are employed, one way or another.

In emergency session at Grimsby sat the Fishing Limits Committee of the British Trawler Federation, faced with the breakdown of the Law of the Sea Conference at Geneva...Britain's hopes of defeating the 12-mile limit demanded by Iceland were dashed partly because India did not support us. For the present, Grimsby and Hull will continue to send their trawlers to Iceland waters, but whether they will bring back the abundant catches of past times is very doubtful. In the last year when the three-mile limit operated, British trawlers brought back 170,000 tons of high quality fish. Last year, even when the 12-mile limit was only partly observed, the catch was down by 18%.

Automatic filleting-machines are an indication that the Distant Fishing Industry is well abreast of the times. It all helps to bring fish in large quantity, and in fresh condition, to the towns of Britain. It may not go on.

Reyjavik, capital of Iceland, is no longer almost a home port for British Trawler crews. The town's 70,000 people well know that twelve miles away from their coastlines there are comparatively few fish. If they can keep us outside that limit they'll get all the big catches themselves; we shall get little. Not much heard of in normal times, the trawler men keep us supplied.

They'll probably have almost empty nets if Iceland has her way. Our Distant Fishing Industry faces something very much like ruin, especially as Russian finance nowadays enables Iceland to buy trawlers herself, and there is no substitute for these fishing grounds. The best hope seems to lie in some compromise, by which British trawlers will not be excluded from the Icelandic waters.