

Interviewed: February 9, 1976

Mr. Kiyoshi Murakami,

501 Moncton Street,
Steveston, B. C.

277-7655

- Started fishing when he was 19 years old that was in 1933.
- His father was a fisherman and he fished around Steveston.
- Kiyoshi's father only fished during summer around Steveston then went to Vancouver Island to fish in the winter.
- Mr. Murakami has a brother who also fishes.
- Mr. Murakami has lived in Steveston for the past 40 years except during the war.
- He has never been injured while fishing but he once turned his boat over when he got too many fish rapped up in the drum.
- The style of the boats haven't changed much but they have gotten bigger.
- The boats used to around 26-30 foot long now they go from 38-60 foot.
- Mr. Murakami is a gillnetter and he also trolls.
- Nets used to be linen, then nylon, then monopley.
- After the war they could fish 5 days a week now they can only fish 1 day a week.
- He used to "bluestone" his linen nets every week, bluestoning kept the nets from rotting.
- Describes bluestoning.
- A linen net lasted about one year when it was used about 5 days a week.
- Linen nets had a habit of going rotten.
- Boats never used to have a "micky mouse", a transmitter.
- Many fishermen have had fires on their boats and have gone up on the rocks.
- One time, a Japanese boat went out and never returned.
- Before the war, Mr. Murakami used to fish around the Nass River.
- In those days they used a net made) out of sturgeon twine.
- At that time (pre-war) fishermen were licensed to fish only in certain areas.
- Mr. Murakami's fishing technique has not changed over the years.

- Radios on fishing boats have made it possible for fishermen to cooperate more, for example, one man can radio another and tell him where he has found fish.
- After the war Mr. Murakami says that "we got trouble from the White people. They did everything they could to stop you from fishing".
- "Some people started fighting.....they do all kind of stuff to try and stop the Japanese from fishing in the Gulf here"; "After the second year back it wasn't so bad".
- Only a few Japanese people came back in the first year after the war.
- The union did not try to stop the government from taking the Japanese-Canadians away during the war.
- Mr. Murakami's boat was confiscated during the war: he paid \$1,200.00 for it and got \$650.00 for it from the government.
- When Mr. Murakami started fishing he was getting 45¢ a piece for sockeye and 25¢ for chum.
- Deckhands were paid by percentage.
- He used to fish for the Canadian Fishing Co. before the war, now fishes for B. C. Packers.
- In reference to Buck Suzuki, Mr. Murakami states "he was the best one to help all the Japanese to come back to fishing".
- In reference to the U.F.A.W.U. he states "if we didn't have a union to look after the fishermen we'd never get the price"
- Union dues used to be \$30 to \$40 a year, it is now \$70 or \$80.
- He does not know if pollution has had any effect on fishing.
- There has been no change in the quality of the salmon he has caught.
- They're catching less salmon now because they have less days to go fishing.
- He used to live in a cannery house before the war, says the house was "just a shack....no nothing".
- The houses had electricity but no stove, he bought a wood stove, no hot water.
- In those days there was a couple hundred company houses.
- About discrimination against the Japanese: fishermen in Steveston over the last 40 years he states, "after the war, in the first year that we came back there was discrimination but after that I don't think so, some do, but it's getting better than before the war, we're (people in

general) all mixed up now".

- When Mr. Murakami was 21 his father built a house and they moved out of the company house.