One advertising method for duping a gullible public is to tell them that they are consuming more of a product. With a bright colored half-page spread, the desire to "be in" is nurtured and the public goes out to buy, and sales rise.

However, the sales of South African rock lobster tails in the U.S.A. have risen little in the past six years and South Africa has only maintained its share of the market. The restrictive South African export quota system primarily accounts for this, because the rising prices of 1964/5 have demonstrated that demand in the U.S. is finally beginning to react to the sales drive. Unless the South African export quota is revised, the 1966 advertising campaign may thus lead to even higher prices within the U.S.

In the Diagram (see page two) the value and poundage of rock lobster tails imported into the U.S. and exported from South Africa are shown for the last six years, together with the figures for the principal competitor, Australia.

In most years, more than 90% of the South African catch comes as frozen tails to the U.S. It must be remembered that the South West Africa fishing statistics are included in the Republic figures and that South West accounts for roughly two-fifths of the total rock lobster tail output. For example, of the total 135 million pounds of tails produced in 1965, 5.5 million pounds were produced at Luderitz. 12.24 million pounds were exported to the U.S.A.

Though 59 Companies share the lobster quota, the Oceana Group predominates in the Republic with factories at Lamberts Bay and North Bay. In South West Africa, the South West Africa Fishing Industries Ltd. (SWAFIL) own the Cape Lobster Canning Co. and Table Mountain Canning Co., both at Luderitz, where the Oceana Group also has a factory to process its quota. All companies sell through the South African Rock Lobster Association (SPFRC). Richard Kulze in New York is the American director.

Most of the lobster fishing takes place within the twelve mile limit. Recently, however, excellent specimens were found on the Vema Seamount, a flat topped peak which nearly breaks the surface, in the mid-Atlantic. As this fishing ground is international, it is most likely to become fished out in a short time, and the company at Walvis Bay, set up to process Vema lobster, may find itself overcapitalized.

In South West, a lobster boat usually contains a skipper, a cook, and twelve fishermen, with six dinghies. Of some fifty boats operating from South West, only some half-dozen have Colored skippers. There are five hundred rock lobster fishermen, half of them European (many Portuguese) and half Coloreds. There are no Bantu in the boats, though some 1200 Ovambos and colored women are employed in the Luderitz factories with 50 Europeans occupying the more skilled posts.

The fishermen in South West receive adequate cash payments for the February to October season. It is estimated that each man on a boat receives $100 per month minimum with bonuses by weight of catch never less than $200 a season. Furthermore, some fishermen are able to go to Walvis Bay for the pilchard season in October. South African fishermen probably earn less, as there are many Colored fishermen operating offshore from small boats. However, for a Colored, an average year's earnings would be about $700, comparing with
a European fisherman's earnings of some $2000 per annum. In the Republic, over 90% of rock lobster fishermen are Coloreds.

No Africans are officially part of the lobster fishing "fleet," being confined by job reservation to the processing factories. It is in the factories that the tails are removed and sorted, the bulk of the body being pulverized to lobster meal, for poultry food. In the Republic, the factory workers are colored but at Luderitz there are some 800 Ovambos. The worker probably lives in the municipal hostel in which case his cash earnings of 50¢ a day are supplemented by an equivalent company contribution to the hostel which includes 35¢ a day for his food. The Ovambo is again precluded from skilled jobs within the factory, such work being done by Colored women, owing to the shortage of white labor.

It is obvious that not a cent of the U.S. price increase for South African lobster tails has been transmitted to the worker in the processing factories. Furthermore, because there is a ceiling to the fishermen's bonus set by the quota, none of the price rises is transmitted to the colored fishermen. Naturally, none of the 59 companies sharing the quota is owned by a Colored. There are no quota concessions to Coloreds, other than when they are members of a boat owned by a European.

ADDENDUM

Tristan da Cunha -- Until the volcanic catastrophe, rock lobster production never exceeded 30,000 cases per year, less than 7% of South African production. In 1965, after the two-year break in fishing, the South Atlantic Islands Development Corporation of Cape Town was granted a concession by the U.K. Government for sole rock lobster fishing rights. The Corporation was also granted rights to build a factory-freezing plant on the main island.