



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Resolutions of the Fishery Advisory Committee, which met recently in Washington, passing on matters of interest to the fisheries and national defense, were presented for consideration today to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes by Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The Committee represents the fisheries industry in consultation with the Federal Government on matters affecting fisheries activities.

The advisory group placed special emphasis on several of its recommendations concerning the fishery resources and national defense. It requested that the Fish and Wildlife Service be designated as a defense agency, so that the essential fishery activities of the Service would not be diminished during the days of emergency and efforts to safeguard our resources against unrestricted forces of depletion would not be relaxed. Attention was called to the fact that the fishery industries need and deserve the help of the Federal Government during the emergency, by virtue of the potential value in coastal defense of its fleets of vessels and its experienced navigators, because of the unique dietary values of fish foods, and because the fishery resources are important as a source of large quantities of high quality food that is produced and marketed at low cost.

Several dangers of the national defense program were anticipated by the Committee, which asked that all Government departments take adequate steps to eliminate and control pollution hazards that might arise during the course of defense development. It requested also that steps be taken to forestall the contemplated use of National forest and park areas for military purposes and that aquatic military maneuvers that would disturb fishes be confined to areas unimportant to valuable fish life.

A fund to provide for emergency work was requested for the Fish and Wildlife Service to prevent or minimize injury to the fishery resources as occasioned by the exigencies of defense, and the Federal Government was asked to make adjustments to prevent injury to American fishing operations whose normal outlets for export have been or will be disturbed by war conditions.

The recommendations also call attention, among other things, to a need for increased activity by the Department in certain phases of fishery management work. In this regard, resolutions were presented that ask for extension of work to establish optimum size limits for all important fishes and for greater efforts to develop fishing gear that will make selective catches of the most valuable sizes of fish. The Committee also recommends a thorough study of the practical value of artificial propagation (fish culture) of Great Lakes fishes.

Other resolutions recommend studies to facilitate and improve the uses of fishery products. The Committee asked for increased efforts to promote orderly distribution and marketing of fishery products; the formation of a Fishery Educational Service that will improve and enlarge public and professional knowledge of the fishery resources and their use and management; the institution of fish transportation studies; and the enlargement of research studies in the preservation of fish.