



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR OF FISHERIES

For Immediate Release

OWI-1210

Assurance was received today by Harold L. Ickes, Coordinator of Fisheries, from Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, that a large percentage of the floating equipment chartered by the Army will be returned to the Alaska salmon-fishing industry in ample time for seasonal operations. Secretary Stimson further stated that where it would be impossible to return the floating equipment chartered, the War Department planned to loan similar equipment to the salmon industry.

"This assurance," said the Coordinator, "will relieve one of the most pressing problems confronting the salmon industry. It is now up to the industry itself to proceed as rapidly as possible with plans in order to obtain a maximum pack of salmon in Alaska."

Three-quarters of Alaska's total revenue is derived from its fisheries, and the bulk of this comes from the salmon pack. In '42, a pack of 5,015,375 cases was put up as contribution to the Nation's war food program, 60 percent of which was taken for military and Lend-Lease uses. A similar percentage will probably be taken this year when, with adequate labor and equipment, Alaska's fishing waters could yield as much as 6 to 6½ million cases.

Chief problem which has faced the salmon industry of the Territory has been the taking of tenders and other floating equipment by the war agencies. This, and lack of adequate labor supply would have heavily decreased the Bristol Bay pack and that along the Alaska Peninsula. This pack, largely red salmon, is the most desirable grade. About 20 percent of last year's pack was released for civilian needs, and another 20 percent is still being held, pending decision of its disposition by Federal food agencies.

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