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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE VESSELS DEPART FOR PHILIPPINES

Albert M. Day, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, announced today that two fishery research and experimental fishing vessels, designed and equipped for the Philippine Fishery Rehabilitation Program, departed from San Francisco for Manila on June 26. From San Francisco, the vessels are to proceed to Los Angeles for a test run and, upon refueling, are to leave for Honolulu about June 28. Stops for fuel and supplies will be made enroute at Honolulu, Wake and Guam. It is expected that the vessels will arrive in Manila about July 25.

The Spencer F. Baird, under the command of John P. Lowman, is the former U. S. Army LT-581 which has been converted into a combination oceanographic vessel and tuna clipper. It is 143 feet long, with 43 feet beam and a draft of 16 feet. Propulsion power consists of twin diesel electric installations geared into a single shaft and propeller which provides very flexible speeds of operation, ranging from 1½ to 14 knots. The vessel is equipped with all of the latest electronic and special devices for navigation and oceanographic research. A complete biological and chemical laboratory is installed on the main deck, as well as special winches for handling hydrographic gear, and experimental trawls and other types of nets. A sharp-freeze compartment for experimentation with freezing fish at sea is located in the after hold. On the after deck, bait tanks have been installed which are equipped with refrigeration and aeration which will make possible experimentation in the handling of bait under all types of conditions. Fishing racks have been installed aft, around the stern of the boat which will be used for tuna fishing by means of poles, as carried on in the Southern California tuna fishery.

The Theodore N. Gill, under the command of Fred C. Zeisenhenne, is the former U. S. Navy mine sweeper, AMc90, and is an experimental purse seiner and west coast type trawler. It is 90 feet long, has a 23 foot beam and a draft of 11 feet. Power is supplied by a six cylinder diesel engine with reduction and reversing gear which provides for a cruising speed of about 10 knots. Like the Baird but, on a somewhat reduced scale, it is equipped for oceanographic work and has a small biological and oceanographic laboratory. A turn-table on the stern is provided for the operation of purse seines as large as any now in commercial use in either the sardine or tuna industries. Trawling gear is of the west coast type. A winch, boom and other necessary installations for this type of gear have been provided.

Beneath the after deck is a refrigerated cold-storage hold that will accommodate catches of between 15 and 20 tons of fish. There is also a sharp freeze compartment for experimental use.

"In out-fitting these vessels," Mr. Day said, "the Service has attempted to incorporate all of the most advanced ideas and equipment for research at sea and experimental fishing. The scientific and experimental fishing data will not only aid the residents of the Republic of the Philippines in modernizing their fisheries and in extending operations to new grounds but will also provide technical data on new types of operations which will be useful to the fishing industries of the United States."

The bulk of the scientific staff which has begun research on the pond-fish industries is already in Manila and is making ready the shore laboratory which will be used for analysis of the oceanographic materials and experimental work in fish processing and the preparation of fishery bi-products.

Mr. Hugh W. Terhune, the Administrator of the Philippine Fishery Program, who has been maintaining temporary headquarters in San Francisco, will leave for Manila, by air, about July 1. By August, it is anticipated that the Philippine Fishery Rehabilitation Program, involving the employment of over 80 scientific, administrative and fishery employees, will be in full operation.

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