UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE — Most or Flanagan - Interior 5634

For Release APRIL 14, 1962

FISH AND WILDLIFE EMPLOYEE RECEIVES CONSERVATION AWARD

An employee of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has been awarded the Woodmen of the World Bronze Plaque Conservation Award, the Department of the Interior announced today.

Lawrence J. (Larry) Merovka of Albuquerque, N. Mex., a 37-year veteran of Federal wildlife work and Regional Supervisor of game management and law enforcement for the Bureau's eight-State southwestern region, was presented the fraternal insurance organization's award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to conservation.

Merovka started his conservation career as a United States Deputy Game Warden in 1924 at his native Collinsville, Ill. He was promoted to United States Game Protector in 1929 and in 1934 was transferred to Memphis, Tenn., to direct Federal game law-enforcement activities in Louisiana. In 1940 he was transferred to the Regional Office in Albuquerque, N. Mex.

Early in his career, Merovka successfully made a precedent-setting case under Section 4 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, dealing with transportation of birds. The case was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States, where it was established that this section applies to all birds protected by State or Federal laws and not just to migratory species.

Merovka also supervised a 1956 undercover operation in Texas which led to the arrests of 53 persons for market hunting activities.

The citation for the award points out that although Merovka is noted for impartiality in enforcing the law, he is not without compassion. On one occasion, he arrested a poverty-stricken violator, had him successfully prosecuted, and then provided groceries for the violator's family while the man was serving a jail sentence.

The citation states:

> "Larry Merovka is a man long known and respected for his high degree of integrity, esteemed for his extensive knowledge in the allied areas of wildlife management and game law enforcement, and he has given generously of both his time and his knowledge to all who approached him. He is a dedicated man who has frequently sacrificed personal considerations for the furtherance of the cause of wildlife conservation. He has a great capacity for bestowing loyal friendship on others, and the ability to arouse and retain the admiration and respect of all who know him."

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P.N. 6089-62