

CITY RESERVOIRS

CLOSED TO REDS

Loyalty Oath Required for Fishing Permits—2 Barred Communists Appealing

By PETER KIHSS

The city is asking for a loyalty oath from applicants for permits to fish in its reservoirs. It has refused such permits to two leading Communists.

Commissioner Arthur C. Ford of the Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity said yesterday that the oath had been required for the last year and a half as a security measure.

"We absolutely do not want to have any people with subversive connections to be in any way familiar with our installations," Mr. Ford added.

The two Communists—Fred M. Fine and Sid Stein, members of their party's new twenty-member executive committee—have both been convicted under the Smith Act of conspiracy to teach and advocate violent overthrow of the Government. Stein also had served a sentence for harboring a Smith Act fugitive.

Both are appealing their convictions. Fine said yesterday they also were planning legal action to reverse the denial of fishing permits.

According to Commissioner Ford, state law and the city's Administrative Code provide that the city may make its watershed lakes and reservoirs available to the public for boating, fishing and ice-cutting. This permissive power is "subject, however, to reasonable rules and regulations," he noted.

16,000 Permits Issued

Over the years about 16,000 free city fishing permits have been issued. In addition to them, State Conservation Department fishing licenses are required.

Commissioner Ford said the city was concerned about vital points and equipment, including some specially devised items that might take a month and more to replace in case of sabotage. Regulations specifically provide "no entrance for any purpose" in certain areas.

He expressed fear that the security and general policing problem would be increased by proposed elimination in the new city budget of watershed guards.

Commissioner Ford said he decided to add the loyalty oath to permit forms when two members of his department were held to be security risks. "I felt we ought to make ourselves as secure as possible in all categories, extending to anybody in contact with our watershed areas."

Accordingly, fishing permit applicants are now required to sign this statement:

"I further state that I am not a member of nor do I subscribe to the principle of any organization which advocates the overthrow of our present form of government."

The form also asks for data on citizenship and criminal convictions. Commissioner Ford said some aliens and ex-convicts had been denied permits in the past. Fine and Stein were the first Communists to be barred.

Last March 13, Fine and Stein, who are both 42 years old, filled out city applications at the Municipal Building. Both recited their Communist employment, criminal convictions and pending appeals.

As to the loyalty oath, Fine wrote: "I do not belong to any organization that advocates overthrowing, etc. The C. P. U. S. A. explicitly renounces force and violence, etc."