

- (6) Several changes have been made in the form of the Commission's budget to simplify it, and it includes much helpful information which heretofore has not been readily available to the Legislature.

Conservation

In making the reductions which I felt were necessary, in the interest of economy, I did not consider that it was advisable to reduce the appropriation for oyster propagation. Accordingly, I recommend to you for each of the years 1940 and 1941 an appropriation of \$100,000.00 which is the sum appropriated for the years 1938 and 1939.

I have also included an adequate amount for the maintenance of the Biological Laboratory at Solomon's.

Public Welfare and Assistance

Six years ago, in April 1933, Maryland received from the Federal Government its first allotment of funds for the relief of wide-spread distress due to unemployment. In those six years we have witnessed many changes. At first it was believed that the need for public assistance was temporary and Maryland planned only to cope with an "emergency." Today the citizens of Maryland and of the United States have written into law a new social obligation toward persons and families in need. To the needy aged and the blind; to children whose homes are threatened by the death, incapacitation or desertion of the wage earner; to those who are no longer able to compete with younger and abler persons in industry, we have given assurance of food, shelter, and other necessities of life.

Many of our citizens feel a concern for the mounting cost of relief. Let us therefore examine our experience in the light of comparative costs, now and in previous years. In May, 1934, the Board of State Aid and Charities, allotted to the several local units the sum of \$1,676,806 for the purpose of direct relief and work relief. Last month (December 1938) these same agencies expended \$816,615, or a little less than half as much. To be sure, other Federal Agencies, chief among them the Works Progress Administration, are providing through work projects for the needs of employable men and their families. But even when the total expenditures are taken into account: viz., Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps added to public assistance, Maryland in September, 1938, was still about 40% below the all time peak for all relief, Federal, State and local, which was reached in the State in February, 1934. When we add to this the fact that in the nation, as a whole, current months are reaching all time highs, exceeding even the peak load of Civil Works Administration days, and that our State is well below the peak month, we have before us evidence that expenditures go up and down, depending upon needs, and not in one continuous upward line. We have before us evidence that expenditures have not skyrocketed merely because money was available, but that they follow the need.

Care of the Needy Aged

In the total population of Maryland there are about 110,500 persons who have passed the age of 65 years. This number is slowly mounting, and each year there is a higher proportion of aged persons among us. Many of these aged persons have suffered severely during the depression. They have suffered