

a part of its responsibility. In the future, its role is to be that of an agency whose main function will be programming and planning on an economic basis to aid watermen and others engaged in the seafood industry to earn a better living.

I conceive of its role in relationship to watermen as being somewhat like that of the extension service and research agency of the University of Maryland to farmers. And just as farmers have benefited from the planning of these two University services, so also will the watermen from the Tidewater Fisheries Commission.

In this work, I suggested—and the Commission, I understand, has followed through on the suggestion—that the members of the Commission visit the various communities in the Tidewater areas to learn directly from the watermen of the problems facing the industry. My idea here was that the Commission must know what these problems are before it is in a position to organize a constructive rehabilitation program. It is my hope, too, that as a result of these visits, the program it eventually presents to the General Assembly will be largely a program evolved from the watermen themselves.

The new Commission, I understand, has initiated a bold and ambitious plan for shell planting, involving the recovery and use of the many hundreds of millions of bushels of shells which lie at the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay.

Another fine demonstration that the agency means business is to be found in its action for a resurvey of the oyster bars of the Bay and its tributaries. There has been no survey of the natural oyster rocks of the Bay since 1912, and the charts used by the courts and the enforcement officers are, and have been for many years, hopelessly out of date. There has been much talk over a period of many years of the need for such a survey, but no action had been taken until this new Commission stepped in with a firm hand and ordered that it be made without delay.

I was gratified to learn that the Commission's overall program to breathe new life into the seafood industry included a project to find new markets for oysters and other seafood products as soon as the supply becomes more abundant. It was also gratifying to learn that a public relations campaign has been launched to capture the confidence and good will of watermen and packers.

We all recognize that there are many problems in trying to build a constructive program of rehabilitation. A short time ago, I heard a prominent man in the seafood industry remark that the differences between the watermen themselves could not be harmonized—that the