

Under the law, the commander of the fishery force of the Commission, the deputy commanders, inspectors, and other employees assigned to law-enforcement duties, have all the powers conferred upon police officers and constables of the State and these powers may be exercised anywhere within the State.

The Commission is charged with the inspection of fish, crabs, terrapin, oysters, clams and other shell fish, caught or sold in the State, and has the special duty of enforcing the cull laws and other protective measures. For instance, its inspectors are constantly examining oyster catches on the boats of tongers and dredgers, as well as on the wharves of the packers, to see that the legal provisions as to under-sized oysters are not violated. Unless this were done, conscientiously and effectively, experience has proven that so many small oysters would be taken out of the Bay before they ever had a chance to mature, that the yield of future years would be cut down appreciably.

During the Administration, marked improvement has been effected with respect to the handling of our oyster problems. Effective enforcement of the three-inch cull law has resulted not only in protecting the future supply but in a marked improvement in the quality of Maryland oysters offered to the consuming public. This improvement has been reflected in a very considerable increase in the demand and in a much higher return to the oystermen in every section of our tidewater.

Looking to our future supply of oysters, an improved program of management has been developed, including the rotation of areas open for dredging in the bay and careful control over the extensive shell planting operations. Recent legislation, based upon the recommendation of the Commission, likewise provides a sound basis for optimism regarding the future of our Maryland oyster industry.

With respect to our fishery problems in the Chesapeake, I think there is also reason for optimism, when we consider the measures which were cooperatively developed with the representatives of the commercial fishing interests and enacted into law at the last session of our General Assembly. This legislation is regarded by the officials of the U. S. Fish and Wild Life Service as marking a very definite step forward in the management of our Atlantic Coast fisheries.

The Commission of Tidewater Fisheries also participated in the development of the Atlantic Coast Marine Fisheries Compact which this State, along with six others, has adopted. It is felt that this compact will be the means for improving greatly the fishing in Maryland.

Hatching efforts have been intensified, particularly in connection with yellow perch, with the result that about 300,000,000 fry were released in 1941, in the streams of Maryland. Shad also have been hatched in considerable numbers.

A most interesting development in the commercial fisheries field transpired within the past several weeks when, at the invitation of the Maryland and Virginia Tidewater Fisheries Commission, the United States Fish and Wild Life Service agreed to undertake a study of the Chesapeake crab industry.

This is an instance where history is repeating itself, for in a similar situa-