

of the utmost importance that whatever other constructive measures may develop as a result of this conference, definite provisions should be made on the part of our two States and the Fish and Wildlife Service for a continuing cooperative study to be carried on as a basis for sound administrative action.

With an adequate and continuing program of fact based upon impartial and disinterested research carried on under the direction of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it should be possible to develop and adopt administrative measures which should result in an equal contribution being made by our two States to the maintenance of an adequate brood stock, and at the same time in an equitable division of the annual harvest which can be safely gathered by the watermen of our two States.

It appears that the flexibility of administration needed to cope with unpredictable developments cannot be achieved under the procedure which our two States have been following in the past, that is, of attempting through the medium of the Legislatures to provide a detailed program of crab management. Meeting as they do in alternate years, our General Assemblies are rarely in step with respect to conservation measures.

For my part, I can see no prospect of dealing effectively with this problem of the management of our crab supply over a period of years unless we are willing in our two States to clothe our tidewater conservation authorities with adequate regulatory powers so that they may be in position to meet together and to agree mutually upon the necessary regulations with each State should adopt.

The State of Virginia has already seen the desirability of clothing their Commission with ample discretionary and regulatory powers. It would seem, therefore, that in this respect the next move is up to our own State and I am prepared to propose to the Maryland Legislature at its next session that our Commission be granted powers at least as extensive as those now possessed by the Virginia Commission in dealing with this problem.

In the meantime, I should like to request Governor Darden together with his Commission to carefully consider the present critical status of this industry in order to determine if it would not be wise and appropriate for the Virginia Commission under the powers which it now enjoys to adopt such further measures as may be calculated to bring about a certain and rapid recovery in our crab supply. On behalf of Maryland, I should like to request through Secretary Ickes, the continued cooperation of the Fish and Wildlife Service in making provision for and conducting in cooperation with the research agencies of our two States the continuing program of research and fact finding to which I have referred above.

Accompanying me I have the members of our Commission of Tidewater Fisheries, the Director of the Department of Research and Education and one of the members of his Commission who is also a prominent packer and a leader of the industry from Crisfield. I also invited to attend today the two members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Compact. Each of these gentlemen is well acquainted with some phase or other of this crab problem and I should like to turn to ask them briefly to comment on the problem as they see it.