

issued a proclamation setting aside the area named in this Chapter as a wild water-fowl sanctuary.

And now, I should like to inform you exactly what principles have guided, and will continue to guide, the present State Administration in every step affecting Conservation. When I took office, I was impressed with two salient facts, which I was convinced were responsible, in no small degree, for the State's failure to take full advantage of our natural resources.

The first thing, apparent to me, was the marked difference of opinion between persons interested in the tidewater fisheries and the sportsmen's groups. The second, political considerations had apparently entered into the handling of Conservation questions and had affected the enforcement of existing provisions.

With respect to the first consideration, it was clear to me that the last Legislature was not ready to pass any of the several proposed measures, in the form in which they were submitted. A continuation of the old set-up would, to my mind, have accomplished nothing. Basing my proposal on the firm belief that decided betterment would be noted if we started off by having each group concentrated on its own problems, rather than have a hopeless conflict between the diverse interests, I submitted to the Legislature two bills which would separate the handling of tidewater questions from those affecting in-land fish and up-land game.

The magnitude of the problems involved in the protection and development of our tidewater industries; the extensive commercial interests connected therewith; the importance in terms of employment to thousands of our citizens, made it advisable, in my opinion, to separate the responsibility for the conduct of a tidewater fisheries department, from that of the State Game and Inland Fish Commissions than would be possible if one Commission had the responsibility effort and attention to its particular problems on the part of each of these commissions than would be possible if one Commission had the responsibility of such different interests and activities. Whether at a later date, a general coordination of every kind of conservation activity, under a department of natural resources, should be made remains to be seen. If, in the light of further experience, such a change is shown to be advisable, I will be the first one for it. But, in the light of conditions as they existed last winter, I preferred to make as much progress as possible at this time. I believe that any fair-minded observer will agree that conditions have improved since, in effect, we have been operating for more than six months under a divided conservation set-up.

It may be argued that the tidewater interests should be administered by a three-man, rather than a five-man commission. But what is more important in my opinion, is the caliber of the men appointed to such a commission, whether it be three or five in number.

I am gratified to report to you that in the present Conservation Commission, consisting of Edwin Warfield, Jr., Robert T. Harrison, and Allan A. Sollers, we have experienced, sound and forward-looking officials, in support of whom I intend to stand unflinchingly for the best interests of conservation.

And that brings me to a discussion of the second of the two underlying faults which heretofore affected conservation; namely, political considerations. Not in a single instance, since the present two Commissions have assumed their office, have I attempted to inject political influence in the consideration of their problems. Furthermore, there has been no suggestion of the injec-