

Commissioner John S. Parsons, of the Virginia Fisheries, was then heard on the subject, and his recommendations on the protection of the "blue crab" concurred with the views of Maryland. In addition he presented a letter from Dr. H. M. Smith, United States Commissioner of Fisheries, in which Dr. Smith recommends both a cull law on hard crabs and protection for the egg-bearing (sponge) crabs. The protection should not be limited to one month, but should cover all seasons.

The Virginia Commissioner was firm in his stand, regardless of the opposition offered by the Virginia packers. The Virginia Legislative committee agreed to stand by the recommendations offered by the two State officials, which are as follows:

First—That it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to catch, take, or have in his or their possession at any time a hard crab, other than one in the "peeler," "shedder," or "buster" stage, which shall measure less than five inches across the shell from tip to tip of spike.

Second—That it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to have in his or their possession at any time, or offer for sale, any female egg-bearing (sponge) crab, known in various localities as "spawn crab," "sponge crab," "blooming female crab," or "mother crab," or such a female crab from which the egg pouch or bunion has been removed.

While each State may add one or more sections to the above to cover local conditions, the two protective measures as indicated are designed to protect the crab industry in the entire Chesapeake basin.

While the Maryland representative urged Virginia to restrict winter dredging for crabs, it was not possible to get same through at this time. But the Virginia committee agreed that if the United States Bureau of Fisheries would investigate just how harmful winter dredging was to the industry, and whether or not the females taken by that means were gravid, that Virginia would abide by the decision of the Government. Dr. Coker, representing the Bureau of Fisheries, said that their Bureau would make the investigation during the next year.

Dr. Coker spoke on the importance of protecting the fish in Chesapeake Bay. His theme was the protection and propagation of shad. Dr. Coker illustrated his talk with Coast Survey maps of the lower Bay, on which was plotted the location of the nets as exist at present. The charts revealed a condition which was a surprise to all present, and showed how it was almost impossible for the shad and herring to get up