

using the very section of Hunting Creek estuary sought to be filled. Congressman Reuss also included a written report from Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist Francis M. Uhler, mentioned above, dated January 31, 1968, and including Mr. Uhler's up-to-the-minute observations of the important waterfowl values that would be lost by the granting of the permit:

"I have been watching waterfowl in that vicinity for more than 40 years, and it has been an outstanding area for observing the important part played by the combination of shallow open waters, fresh tidal marshes, and semi-aquatic woodlands in creating a haven for a great variety of aquatic wildlife. In spite of the severely polluted condition of the adjacent Potomac, and drastic changes in the waterfowl feeding grounds of the broad, shallow cove that forms the mouth of Big Hunting Creek, this area still is the most important feeding grounds for diving ducks along the fresh tidal waters of the Potomac. It also attracts a great variety of other waterfowl, and the adjacent Belle Haven picnic grounds have become a mecca for bird students and interested visitors. The convenient accessibility of this section of the Mount Vernon Parkway for persons to enjoy aquatic natural history is unequalled in the Washington region.

"With the continued destruction by sand and gravel dredging in the adjacent Dyke Marshes, and the recent elimination of the colorful natural aquatic gardens through trash dumping and filling the nearby Big Hunting Creek tidal marsh adjacent to the west side of Memorial Parkway, the preservation of the remnants of these unique wildlife habitats has become increasingly important.

"The proposed construction of a 19-acre real estate development in the shallow waters of the mouth of Big Hunting Creek is certain to be detrimental, not only to waterfowl that now feed or rest in this shallow bay, but in the adjacent section where dredging will greatly alter existing depths. Unavoidable increases in turbidity, as well as disturbance by man, are likely to occur in neighboring waters.

"Most important foods for waterfowl are produced in shallow waters, or those that are clear enough to permit sunlight to penetrate to the bottom. Under the polluted conditions that now exist in the tidal Potomac for more than 30 miles downstream from our Nation's Capital, shallow depths (less than 5 feet) have become doubly important in the maintenance of waterfowl feeding grounds. Adequate light penetration facilitates feeding as well as being essential for plant growth. Submerged food plants have been destroyed in all but the shallowest zones. Fortunately certain types of pollution-tolerant invertebrates such as midge larvae (Chironomidae), isopod crustaceans, and a few kinds of mollusks still furnish foods for diving ducks. These foods, together with the protection supplied by the shallow, sheltered waters at the mouth of the cove, continue to attract many kinds of waterfowl. For example, last week I had the pleasure of watching several hundred lesser scaups 'blue-bills' and ruddy ducks, as well as smaller numbers of black ducks, mallards, common goldeneyes, buffleheads, oldsquaws, black-backed gulls, herring gulls, ring-billed gulls, and a whistling swan in this area although some sections were coated with ice."

In forwarding the material to Congressmen Reuss and Moss, Mr. Uhler said on January 31, 1968:

"DEAR MR. REUSS AND MR. MOSS: I prepared the accompanying comments last week in response to your request of January 16 for additional information regarding the waterfowl feeding and resting grounds in the Hunting Creek estuary below Alexandria, Va., but when I tried to send it officially I found that there apparently is 'more than meets the eye' in the background of the proposed fill and real estate development in those waters.

"Therefore, I am taking the liberty of sending this letter to you personally."

Mr. Uhler is a public servant of high courage. We shall make it our business to be alert to any reprisals that may be taken against him for telling the truth.

A considerable number of other witnesses testified against the proposed fill. They included representatives of the Izaak Walton League of America, Audubon Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, the Northern Virginia Conservation Council, the Washington Urban League, the Alexandria Council on Human Relations, and numerous concerned individuals. The engineer for Howard P. Hoffman Associates, not surprisingly, testified that the permit ought to be granted.

9. *The "Cain Mutiny" begins.*—On March 15, 1968, Assistant Secretary Cain was apparently getting worried. Michael Frome, the distinguished conservation editor of Field & Stream, writer for American Forests and other conservation publications, had heard of the matter and had been calling Mr. Cain. Hence the following memorandum from Mr. Cain to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, dated March 15, 1968: