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U.S. OPENS DRIVE ON DUCK BOOTLEGGERS AND BUYERS

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Forty-two duck bootleggers, duck trappers, and buyers were found guilty and 20 more awaited trial in Federal Courts in Norfolk, Va., Baltimore, Md., and Wilmington, Del., after the Bureau of Biological Survey, Department of Agriculture, closed in on a concentrated drive to break up the illegal trapping and selling of wild ducks and geese on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia.

"This isn't the last of our drives," says W. E. Crouch, chief of the U. S. Game Management Agents, "We're going to clean up all the sore spots in the country. The Federal government will prosecute not only the duck bootleggers but the buyers as well, for both buyers and sellers are violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act when they deal in wild ducks or geese."

The Eastern shore was selected as an area in the nation-wide series of drives against duck bootleggers because it has been the source of supply for illicit traffic in migratory birds sold in certain restaurants, night spots, and private clubs in Norfolk, Richmond, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston.

In this drive the Survey used its most expert agents, some operating boats, others using airplanes or automobiles, and others entering the various towns and villages as undercover operators.

After investigating for more than a year, the agents, who kept in touch with one another only through Crouch or his assistant, Chester A. Leichhardt, brought in evidence against the biggest bootleggers along the Atlantic coast. The

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prosecutions opened in Norfolk on June 1, when Federal Judge Luther B. Way sentenced 11 violators to jail for 30 to 120 days, fined 5 others \$50 to \$100 each, and suspended imposition of sentence on 7 men for 3 years. The prosecutions were conducted by U. S. District Attorney Sterling Hutcheson and Assistant U. S. District Attorneys Harry H. Holt, Jr., and Russell T. Bradford.

Four days later, the agents moved on to Baltimore to appear in 19 cases against duck bootleggers and buyers. Federal Judge William C. Coleman found them all guilty and imposed fines ranging from \$20 to \$300 and costs each. Ten more violators will appear within the month for jury trial. Assistant U. S. District Attorney C. Ross McKendrick directed the prosecution against the buyers and sellers, some of whom were prominent members of their community.

In his remarks to the defendants, Judge Coleman said:

"It ought to be known by this time that you can't deal in wild ducks. The Federal government spends millions of dollars to restore our waterfowl, and you folks go about breaking the very laws of Congress designed to make this work possible. That some of you are substantial citizens of the community is no reason to expect special consideration—it is all the more reprehensible that you violate the law."

Emphasizing the fact that duck buyers as well as bootleggers will be prosecuted, Crouch points to the 10 cases that will appear before the Federal Court in Wilmington on June 16. With one exception, each defendant is a buyer of wild ducks or geese. "Though it may seem that the Biological Survey heretofore has concentrated its efforts in arresting the bootleggers," says Crouch, "that is not the case. We have to get the buyer as well as the seller, for one encourages the other. It's like a vicious circle, and we're going to break it."