

Dec. 16, 1932

Mr. Arthur E. Rapp
City Hall
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Dear Mr. Rapp:

I have your letter of December 12.

Let me set your mind at rest on one point: I agree with you entirely that the Department should have, and ultimately will have, full regulatory powers on all kinds of wild life.

The only question is whether it is wise to ask for full powers over protected game at this time. I think not.

The present lamentable state of nation-wide mutual distrust between sportsmen and protectionists has been 20 years in-the-making, and cannot be unmade in one year. Iowa has a far better chance of unmaking it at this moment than any other state. I caution her not to spoil that chance by too much haste. The destiny of sport in not only Iowa, but to some degree in the whole country, hinges on doing this thing wisely, step-by-step, and well.

Let us remember that we sportsmen have only a theory to offer as a solution. We had better test that theory in actual practice before staking the whole future on it.

Don't forget that the protectionist faction is composed of people of far lower mentality than Mrs. Frankel, Mrs. Stewart, and Mrs. Whitley, just as the sportsman faction is composed of people of far lower mentality than the present leaders. The rank and file on both sides are going to be hard to handle. Your staff for handling them is new, overworked, and relatively inexperienced. Your stock of technical facts is inadequate. Let's grow into this job. If you complete it successfully in 10 years you will all deserve a monument.

In all these remarks I am discussing protected game only. Nobody is going to question full authority over pheasants or other now-shootable species.

I would not feel quite so strongly if the two boards were combined and a group of thoroughly representative protectionists were participating in the vote on each successive move. I am speaking as of the status quo ante.

I enclose a rough memo on my Iowa impressions.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

ALDO LEOPOLD

AL/vh
Incl.

MEMO FOR P.L.E. ON IOWA REPORT:

Missouri Jungle Ruffed Grouse. Correction made.

Cornfield Mallards. The "legitimacy" is purely comparative. It is cleaner than any other form of duck shooting except "jumping." The ducks have an infinite choice of cornfields.

Bow and Arrow. I cannot suppress what seems to me a sound idea simply because I happen to shoot a bow. Certainly rifles are out of the question in a farm community, and shotguns on deer go against the grain of sportsmanship.

Foxes. Correction made as to cache contents being typical.

Corralberry for Quail. I am illustrating a principle by means of an example. Moreover I know from experience that the correlation of quail with corralberry is very striking, even though I can't explain it.

Wood Thrushes vs. Band Concert. I have no hesitation in dogmatically asserting this esthetic principle. It is, to be sure, only opinion, but in esthetics we have no research to go by, and possibly never will. The opinion, or "feeling" of enlightened individuals is all the guidance there is, and I have no hesitation in asserting my own feeling as a better guide to social policy than the feeling (if any) of "bigger and better" boosters.

Trail's Flycatcher. I got this from Bill Schorger. There is possibly an error. He is out of town. I will verify on his return. Thanks for calling to my attention.

A.L.