

COPY

January 28, 1953

Honorable A. A. Erhart
Member of the Senate
Pismo Beach, Calif.

Dear Al:

This is to thank you for taking up the matter of condor trapping with the Department of Fish and Game. I have a copy at hand of Seth Gordon's reply and regret that it does not allay my fears as to the consequences of this new policy of allowing people to molest these birds.

There is quite a controversy over this matter which has been brewing for some time. Regarding Seth's belief that no precedent has been set in this case - I was informed last year that the Commission at that time granted a permit to the same party to take a pair of young condors from the nest. This in my opinion was a misuse of authority but due to cordial and cooperative relations with the department and to avoid controversy I demurred in objecting as did others I know who hold similar opinions on the matter.

Evidently failing in the attempt to get young condors from the nesting sites, this program to trap grown condors is now being permitted. If this also fails what's going to be the next step? And how many may be trapped in order to get birds of opposite sex? I definitely feel that a precedent has been set in this case that is contrary to the policies under which condors have been saved from extermination.

In this area we have enjoyed most cordial and cooperative relations with the Department of Fish and Game and it is most regrettable that we are at such odds over this condor issue. It is even more regrettable to note that practically all the forces that have been active in the conservation of California's wildlife and especially in saving the Condor have been ignored in their opposition to this trapping.

According to the information I have received, The Cooper Ornithological Society, The Sierra Club, The University of California, The Audubon Society and the Forest Service have expressed their opposition to the granting of this permission. In my opinion these organizations have good reason for their opposition, and in view of what they have done to further the interests of wildlife conservation in California and also in consideration of the great number of people they represent I would think their wishes would be given preference in such a controversial matter as this.

Again may I thank you for your interest and cooperation and hoping this matter has not taken more of your time than it deserves, I am

Very truly yours,

Ian I. McMillan