CRAWFISH-MINDED — These are the four men who figured prominently in last night's meeting in Breaux Bridge to organize Louisiana's flourishing crawfish industry.

The name of the new organization: Louisiana Crawfish Industry Development Association. From left are Secretary of State W. O. Martin, Jr., who read the organizational charter; Rep. J. Burton Angelle of St. Martin, who was elected president of the new organization; Rep. Steve Dupuis of St. Landry Parish, who presided at the meeting; and Carl Simon, treasurer of the new group. Not shown is Willie Landry, elected vice president.

BY JOSEPH MASSA
DAILY ADVERTISER

Crawfish Chiefs

Plan Expansion

BREAUX BRIDGE — Crawfish producers and processors formed an organization here last month with the purpose of transforming a $4 million business into a $40 million business "overnight."

Attending the meeting, and singing the praises of the Southern Louisiana delicacy were state legislators and officials, one of whom suggested that the peculiarities of the shells could be removed as the state symbol, to be replaced by the crawfish.

Sen. Garland Bonin, who made the suggestion, added that this would help make the crawfish a familiar symbol.

"We must let the people of the United States know what a crawfish is," he said, adding that the resolution to change the state symbol would be ready Monday.

Secretary of State Wade O. Martin, before reading the charter, said this "was the final culmination of many years of hard work and determination" and predicted that the new organization would build a $40,000,000 business to a $400,000,000 business "overnight."

"This is the finest food anyone can eat in the world," the secretary said.

Also present at last night's organizational meeting were Rep. Steve Dupuis of St. Landry Parish, Rep. Angelle, Sen. Garland Bonin of Lafayette Parish, Sen. Sam Broussard of Iberia Parish, and David Pearce, State Commissioner of Agriculture.

Dupuis, who presided said crawfish was "a growing industry where everyone can do better" but that "we cannot gain recognition in places like New York without organization."

"He said there would be no attempt to hurt anyone, but that "we will proceed slowly, but surely to our goal."

Angelle, co-chairman of the organizational meeting along with Dupuis, said the organization's aim will be to expand the crawfish eating belt from a 50-mile radius around Breaux Bridge and "put it on the markets in Chicago, St. Louis and New York."

"Finest Food"

Broussard called crawfish "one of the finest and most delicate foods that you can cook." and said Southern Louisiana was in a good position now to exploit the growing product.

Pearce promised the full backing of his department in selling the crawfish product to the rest of the country and the world.

"This could easily be a $25,000,000 industry," he said, adding that "we have strength in numbers, unity, and organizational ability."

"I am trying to get us to the point where we can get together, work out your problems, come up with ideas, and we'll have to sell your product."

Pearce showed a six-minute film depicting the crawfish industry in Louisiana and said that the resolution to change the state symbol would be on various television channels in both Louisiana and Texas. Pearce said he was going to push crawfish in Texas first since it was his state.

"We must let the people of Parish know what crawfish is," he said, adding that the resolution to change the state symbol would be "overnight." "This is the finest food in the country," he said.

"We've been talking about this (expansion) for two years and we intend to do something active in this," he said. "We've been looking at New York without organization."

The group elected a 24-member board of directors, who subsequently chose the organization's first officers.

Rep. J. Burton Angelle of St. Martin Parish was elected president; Willie Landry of Lafayette, vice president; and Carl Simon of Breaux Bridge, secretary-treasurer. Board members, divided into groups representing all segments of the crawfish industry, were named as follows:

- crawfish wholesalers (two) — Stanley LeBlanc and Willie Lester, both of Lafayette; crawfish wholesalers (two) — Mulate Guidry of Breaux Bridge and R. J. Duple of Pierre Part;
- crawfish processors (two) — Louis Naquin of Breaux Bridge and Berthomont Maistre; crawfish wholesalers (two) — Wesley Amy of Henderson and Euclid Rocha of Catahoula; crawfish brokers (two) — Aubrey Hedges of Bayou Pierre and J. E. Sexton of Rosedale; crawfish wholesalers (two) — Wesley Amy of Henderson and Euclid Rocha of Catahoula; crawfish wholesalers (two) — Aubrey Hedges of Bayou Pierre and J. E. Sexton of Rosedale; restaurant operators (two) — Pat Huval of Henderson and Lisa Martin of Red Laticiais of Breaux Bridge; at-large members (two) — Dr. Louis Graham, assistant to the biology department at LSU, and Dr. R. O'Neal Smithson of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service at LSU; officers (two) — Roland Faulk of Crowley and Dr. L. J. Bourque of Lafayette; at-large members (one) — Aubrey Heumann of Breaux Bridge, Harry Webb of Thibodaux, Simon Shexnayder and Wilbert Broussard, both of Bayou Pierre, and two ex-officio members who will always be the president and vice president of the Bridge Crawfish Festival Association.

Carl Simon (president) and Ray Pellerin (vice president) both of Breaux Bridge.

BOARD ENLARGED

Martin, who read the contents of the charter, had originally called for an 18-member board, but conflict developed when representatives from the Eastern part of Louisiana wanted to have nine of those posts filled by Easterners. West Louisiana representatives objected to this and one even proposed that the East have only one board member.

All the motions on this matter were tabled until later in the meeting when it agreed by a unanimous vote to enlarge the board to 24 members — six from the East and six from the West.