

# Hydraulic Clam Law Asked in Md.

LEXINGTON PARK, Md., Sept. 3 (AP)—A Maryland State senator has called on the Potomac River Fisheries Commission to seek legislation that would legalize "without equivocation" the hydraulic dredging of clams in the river.

Sen. J. Frank Raley (D-St. Marys) said the Maryland and Virginia legislatures should take such action at their sessions in 1965 to clarify public policy and relieve "chaotic conditions that are now existing."

Clamming is being permitted in the river under a temporary court order. The bi-state commission, which supervises the fishery under a 1958 compact, felt it lacked authority to permit hydraulic harvesting of clams since a compact restriction against dredging of oysters might also be applied to clams.

## Seek Court Order

Maryland Eastern Shore clambers sought a court order to bar the Potomac clam harvesting because it interferes with their markets.

Raley said in a letter to the commission that despite lengthy legal wrangling "your commission will ultimately have to meet this problem head-on."

He said the production of clams has become a rapidly developing and important industry to his county "employing over 150 people and funneling into the economy over \$20,000 weekly."

He said if the budding industry is shut down in St. Marys "because of technicalities and the pressures of conflicting economic interests," it ultimately would be a blow to the industry statewide.

## Asks Policy Resolution

Raley told the commission that he was aware from its public hearings that the agency realizes the potential of clamming in the river and is "no less anxious than I to reach the full development of the river."

He suggested that it adopt a resolution of policy to that effect and ask the legislatures of Maryland and Virginia "to immediately pass an amendment to the compact legalizing without equivocation the production of soft shell clams with hydraulic devices."