Senate Crowns Crawfish Champ But House Differs

By JACK OWENS

Baton Rouge, La. (AP)—The Senate crowned a chamber champion crawfish eater Thursday, but the House decided it had the world’s champion.

A garland of daisies and fern served as the crown for Sen. Adrian (Pelican) Duplantier, New Orleans, who emerged from a much-raking investigation as Senate titlist only to see another probe launched.

The House recognized James P. (Starved) Smith, Union Parish, as its all-categories champion because of the magnificent showing he made, without even trying, during the contest between Duplantier and Sen. Garland (Bulgy) Bonin, Lafayette.

Smith was introduced to boiled crawfish Wednesday night when he sat at the same table with Duplantier and Bonin. He didn’t really mean to horn in on the endurance contest, but he was hungry and decided he liked crawfish.

When the senators’ chins hung on the table, Smith still was shelling crawdad tails and feeding his face, unnoticed by the world, he thought.

House members, when they had time to get over the Wednesday night crawfish feed for about 300 persons, heard of Smith’s gallantry beyond the line of duty and decorated him with a plaque and a resolution.

House Speaker Vail Delony signed a proclamation presenting to Smith declaring him “the crawfish-eating champion of either chamber, any parish, any state and the entire world, including any orbiting spacemen.”

Lt. Gov. C. C. Aycock did the coronation honors in the Senate, spurred on by Sen. Olaf Fink, New Orleans.

Until then the title contest had been something of a Frenchman’s draw—both Bonin and Duplantier claimed victory and each claimed the other cheated in the one-hour plus bout.

Fink said a Senate probe turned up a foul on Bonin’s part, so he was put on welfare. Besides, Bonin may not be in the Senate long. He is in line to become Louisiana welfare director.

Sen. J. D. Deblieux, Baton Rouge, called for a Senate probe into all the countercharges of cheating.

He asked for an investigating committee of 37 senators and Lt. Gov. Alcock to serve an unlimited time at $100 a day and all the crawfish they can eat.”

Deblieux said this was the only kind of per diem committee he would vote for because “I want to get to the top of this matter.” In the excitement, his resolution was lost, or deliberately misplaced by some senator with a weak stomach.