

**JOURNAL**  
OF THE  
**House of Representatives**  
OF THE  
**REGULAR SESSION**  
OF THE  
**THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE**

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## ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The Honorable Secretary of State announced that the next business in order is the election of a Speaker of the House of Representatives, and announced that nominations for Speaker of the House are now in order.

Hon. W. H. Bledsoe of Lubbock county nominated Hon. R. E. Thomason of El Paso county.

Hon. J. C. Murrell of Cook county seconded the nomination of Hon. R. E. Thomason.

Hon. Adrian Pool of El Paso county seconded the nomination of Hon. R. E. Thomason.

Hon. Geo. B. Terrell of Cherokee county seconded the nomination of Hon. R. E. Thomason.

Hon. Barry Miller of Dallas county seconded the nomination of Hon. R. E. Thomason.

Mr. Miller of Dallas offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Reading Clerk call the roll, and as each member's name is called he walk to the Reading Clerk's desk and place his ballot for Speaker in a hat.

The resolution was read second time and was adopted.

The Honorable Secretary declared nominations closed and directed the Clerk to call the roll, and requested each member as his name is called to come forward and deposit his ballot.

The Honorable Secretary then ap-

pointed the following tellers to count the ballots:

Mr. Hornby, Mr. Satterwhite, Mr. Fly and Mr. Curtis.

The ballots having been counted by the tellers, the result was announced as follows:

Hon. R. E. Thomason received 134 votes.

The Honorable Secretary then declared Hon. R. E. Thomason duly elected to be Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Thirty-sixth Legislature and appointed the following committee to escort the Speaker-elect to the Speaker's stand.

Mr. Brown of Tarrant, Mr. Bledsoe and Mr. Murphy.

The committee having performed their duty, the Honorable Secretary administered the oath of office to the Speaker-elect.

Mr. Brown of Tarrant then presented the Speaker-elect to the House.

Speaker Thomason then addressed the House, thanking the members for the honor conferred upon him, as follows:

Mr. Secretary of State, Members of the House of Representatives:

You have conferred upon me the highest honor within your gift, and I thank you. While appreciating this manifestation of your friendship and confidence, I also realize its great responsibility. I need and must have your hearty co-operation. It shall be my purpose at all times to treat every member with fairness and courtesy, and I shall also undertake to give to every issue and every section of this great State the just consideration to which it is entitled. That I may be all that this honorable and responsible position requires shall be my earnest endeavor. You are interested as much as I in organizing this House upon the basis of efficiency first, and I, therefore, trust that in the election of our officers you will not be guided by partisan friendship or political expediency, but look alone to the public welfare. I am going to appoint the committees as soon as practicable, and it is needless to say that I cannot appoint every man on every committee that he desires, but I shall do the best I can under the circumstances, having regard first for the good of the people whom we have the honor to represent. I indulge the hope that this Legislature is so impressed with the importance and seriousness of the times that we shall transact the people's business with deliberation and fidelity. I am anxious to see this Legislature remain in session until all important business is cleared from the calendar. It has almost become a habit in recent years for some of the committees, and notably the Appropriation Committee, to do very little work during the Regular Session, relying upon the Governor calling a special session for its work. I am opposed to any such procedure. The law never contemplated that there should be extraordinary sessions, except to meet some emergency. We are elected knowing

our remuneration and the general scope of the work, and we owe it to our constituents to remain here until all work is done. I am, therefore, going to insist that the Appropriation Committee that I shall appoint begin its labors contemporaneously with other committees and pursue its work with diligence to the end that the House may begin the consideration of the financial needs of the State as quickly as possible.

Naturally, the bills introduced will take a wide range, and legislation unheard and perhaps undreamed of may be passed. These are matters that will be controlled by your personal desires. But there are some questions upon which the people have spoken long ago—and that in stentorian tones—which should receive our very earliest consideration.

Liquor has been ruining the lives of individuals for ages. It has wrecked many happy homes; and has filled our jails, asylums and penitentiaries. It has carried on a traffic concerning which not one good word has ever been said in its defense. It has corrupted our politics and kept up a constant political disturbance for the past twenty years. America went to war for an ideal, but liquor does not belong in the category of ideals. The liquor traffic should be buried along with the Kaiser and consigned to the realm of forgotten things. I rejoice with you that but little remains but to bury the dead; but may I express the hope that the obsequies be conducted without resort to dilatory tactics in order that we may promptly and seriously begin consideration of the business needs of the State? Less than one year ago the Legislature, of which many of us were members, passed the Zone Bill which let the world know that Texas believes in boys above booze, and in victory above vice. That law stood the test of the courts but will soon become inoperative, and in view of our highest criminal court holding statutory State-

wide prohibition unconstitutional, it is imperative that this body submit a constitutional amendment to the people, and I trust you will join me in a sincere effort to dispose of the same in a very few days.

The women of Texas—may God bless them—are not asking any favors of us, but they are demanding simple even-handed justice. They have recently shown that they know how to read as well as scratch a ballot, which is more than some foreigners can do who have in times past held the balance of political power in Texas. I don't want the Americanism of this Legislature to ever be questioned, and I want the American woman to walk by the side of the American man to the ballot box. If they are good enough to knit the socks, cook without sugar, sell Liberty Bonds and War Stamps, work on the farms and in the munition factories, minister to the sick and dying on the battlefields, and give birth to and rear the knightliest sons that ever fought for freedom, then they are also good enough to vote. Some man has said that most legislation is a process of trading, and if that be true, I hope this Legislature will trade off the illiterate foreigner who has corrupted so many of our elections for the pure, patriotic American woman. Let none but American citizens be on guard hereafter. I not only want women to have the full right of suffrage, but I have been known as a crank for some years in insisting that we also amend our Constitution—or better still, begin preparations for a new one—providing that none but American citizens shall participate in our elections, or have a voice in our governmental affairs. I want no divided allegiance in Texas, and I want him whose heart beats for another flag to know that he just as well be in "No Man's Land." Let this Legislature write in letters of gold, so that never again will a pro-German in a distant State, representing the German-American Alliance and the corrupt brewing interests, have the temerity to say that he found in Texas "A glorious, thorough-going and self-conscious Germanism."

Equal in importance to it all, however, are the great problems of reconstruction that now confront us. No Legislature that ever assembled in Texas—saving perhaps one—had more pressing questions, and none that ever had the same opportunity to render great public service, if we only apply ourselves to the task before us. More than 200,000 Texas boys have laid

themselves upon the altar of their country. Many have "Gone West" by making the supreme sacrifice; many thousands more are coming back to us crippled and diseased; still more are coming back to us with their fortunes depleted and without employment. They must and will be provided for. Our people have suffered from unusual but necessary financial demands in order to carry on the war; they have cheerfully stood the burdens and hardships of high taxes, increased cost of living, and the most unprecedented drought in the history of the country. Our citizens, whether in the front line trenches, or keeping the home fires burning, have given, not their bit, but their all in helping wipe autocracy off the face of the earth and making this a better and safe place in which to live. But every cloud has a silver lining—it is always darkest just before the dawn.

Since victory has come to our forces, it now becomes necessary, however, for us to reduce the burdens of taxation, as much as possible consistent with good and efficient government. If we have needless offices, boards, or commissions, we should in the interest of economy abolish or consolidate them.

It is highly important that we develop and conserve our resources. There was never before such an opportunity for bringing together of the landless man and the manless land. There are thousands of acres in the central and eastern portions of the State needing drainage, while in the section from which I come countless acres only need the benefits of irrigation to make them as fine as Southern California. We need more land owners and fewer tenants. Many returning soldiers must have homes. We should encourage the building of good roads in every section of the State, and let them be of the most permanent type, built along scientific lines. Nature seems to have placed an ocean of oil and gas under us. We must encourage the honest and sincere development of the same, but we must also let the fake stock salesman and grafter know that he is not welcome in Texas. Let this Legislature apply itself to these great problems, and let conservation and reclamation not only of our lands, but of all of our great undeveloped resources be our study by day, and our dream by night.

The war has brought problems and hastened reforms that we formerly thought our children would work out in-

stead of us. Capital and labor must both be encouraged to the end that they be friends and not enemies. We should invite and encourage new people and new capital to our State in order that our vast area be settled. We must not forget that good government rests upon the education of the masses. It is the only antidote for Bolshevism and I. W. W.-ism. The Declaration of Texas Independence asserted that unless a "People are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty, or the capacity for self-government." Our public schools should be well provided for first, but our agricultural colleges and normals are of equal importance, and our University should be what the fathers of Texas wrote into the Constitution, "A university of the first class." Our courts should be made to function because the interminable delays and technical procedure now prevailing means unnecessary expense, as well as a denial of justice.

If we give heed to truly constructive legislation, we will have acquitted ourselves with credit and receive the thanks of a grateful people. America has justly and deservedly taken her place in the forefront of nations. Henceforth she

will be the leader of the world, and Texas must do its part. With faces turned toward the east where lie our loved ones under the sod of France, and where bloom the poppies red on Flanders field, let this Legislature, when it shall have ended, be able to send the glad message to our gallant sons over there that those of us over here have preserved the honor and traditions of Texas and America; that we have not forsaken the faith of our forefathers, and that we have made Texas safe for progress and decency, as well as democracy.