

**JOURNAL**  
OF THE  
**House of Representatives**

OF THE  
**REGULAR SESSION**

OF THE  
**THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE**

**BEGUN AND HELD AT**

**THE CITY OF AUSTIN, JANUARY 11, 1921**



**VON BOECKMANN-JONES CO., PRINTERS**  
AUSTIN, TEXAS  
1921

## 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. Ben L. Cox of Taylor county nominated Hon. Chas. G. Thomas of Denton county.

Hon. Newt. B. Williams of McLennan county seconded the nomination of Hon. Chas. G. Thomas.

Hon. John Davis of Dallas county seconded the nomination of Hon. Chas. G. Thomas.

Hon. Lee Satterwhite of Carson county seconded the nomination of Hon. Chas. G. Thomas.

Hon. A. B. Curtis of Tarrant county seconded the nomination of Hon. Chas. G. Thomas.

Hon. John M. Adams of Tarrant county seconded the nomination of Hon. Chas. G. Thomas.

Mr. Hill 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 vote 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 vote.

The Honorable Secretary then appointed the following tellers to count the vote:

Mr. Faubion, Mr. Chitwood, Mr. Beavens, Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Moore and Mr. Rowland.

The votes being taken, and counted by the tellers, the result was announced, as follows:

Hon. Chas. G. Thomas received 134 votes.

The Honorable Secretary then declared Hon. Chas. G. Thomas duly elected to be Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Thirty-seventh Legislature and appointed the following committee to escort the Speaker-elect to the Speaker's stand:

Mr. Hall, Mr. Teer, Mr. Seagler, Mr. Hill and Mr. Swann.

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

The Honorable Secretary then introduced Speaker Thomas, who addressed the House, as follows:

I scarcely know in what words to express my high appreciation of the honor you have conferred upon me this day. Such words as have been spoken of and to me today, are usually reserved for one's tombstone, perhaps upon the theory that a disembodied spirit may view them without emotion, but to me being still in the flesh and human, they are most pleasantly overpowering, though not entirely deserved.

For the honor I sincerely thank you. I am convinced that I stand here in this capacity as the representative of

you, my friends, and these friends I can never forget. No king had more loyal sceptre-bearers, no ruler more faithful knights, no general more devoted soldiers, no man more loyal friends, than mine have been.

"It is my joy in life to find,

At every turning of the road  
The strong arms of a comrade kind  
To help me onward with my load.  
And since I have no gold to give  
And love alone must make amend,  
My only prayer is while I live  
God make me worthy of my friends."

But deeper than any appreciative words to them I might utter,—it is for me to show my estimation of their services and give them some return, by making apparent and visible, that in selecting and electing me for Speaker, they have given this body a presiding officer who will be absolutely fair, impartial and just to all.

The responsibility I am unable to bear unless your gracious aid is accorded me. Confidently do I invoke that aid in the interest of our State whose splendid citizenship we represent. You have placed upon me a supreme and sacred trust, and I now here consecrate myself to your service. Devoted to the State of my nativity, thrilled by her traditions, and mindful of her welfare, I pledge my co-operation as presiding officer in your deliberations. As true as my friends have been, yet, I am under obligations to no man. I take this office with my hands untied. None of them, noble men as they are, have asked for any favors. And as Speaker, I shall know no North, no South, no East, no West, but Texas in her entirety, one and inseparable. In my rulings I shall be governed by your rules as I understand them. I may make errors—all men do, but I assure you every mistake made by me will be one of the head and not the heart. In all decisions and matters coming before me, I shall be forgetful as to whether my decisions will inure to the advantage of those who may be with me on the question at issue or to those who may differ with me. I shall endeavor to stand as Speaker, as I have stood upon the floor of two preceding Legislatures, on all matters, frank, open, fair, indiscriminate, without favor to any special one—but true to the interest and cognizant of the responsibility of all the people of this State. Efficiency first shall be my standard in appointing the employes and you are as

much interested as I am in seeing that efficient officers are elected in the organization of the House. I shall endeavor to select efficient, competent and courteous stenographers. I shall appoint the committees as soon as possible. It may be impossible for me to appoint every man upon every committee he may wish, but I will do the very best I can, having at heart, first, the people whom we have the honor to represent.

Years ago, when a small boy, as I studied civil government in the public school of my home town, I was impressed with the idea that every man should give some of his service to his community, his country, his State; and in later years, while in college, I read the words of that Shakespearian genius, who said:

"Let all the ends thou aimest at  
Be thy own, thy country's and thy  
God's."

And still in later years, I saw the same lofty sentiment expressed upon the tombstone of one of the South's great men in Atlanta, Georgia, which stands after years of rain and storm:

"He who saves his country, saves all things,

And all things saved will bless him.  
He who lets his country die, lets all things die,

And all things dying will curse him."

I have come here, and I trust, so have you, with only one purpose in my heart—that was to give the best service possible as my county's representative to the good of Texas. I had no political ambitions then and have none now. I come as a layman, with the good of my countrymen on my heart, ready and anxious to put my hands and shoulder to the wheels of State and help to push her upward and onward to greater endeavors and nobler achievements.

It has been the custom for years to select for this position I occupy, some talented lawyer and great and many have been those that have presided from this platform, one whose eloquence could charm while his wisdom could instruct. But you have departed from that custom in calling me from a plain business life to act as your Speaker and I shall feel at liberty to depart from the former and in a plain, practical business way remind you of only a few things, which deserve your care-

ful attention and deliberate consideration.

We are met here for business, sacred business, the people's business, the business of our State Government, to foster its enterprises and provide for its institutions. As I grasp the sentiment of our Constitution the Legislature is to meet every two years for the purpose, first to provide for the support and maintenance for the next two years of the State institutions and support of State Government; and second, to take up such other matters as might be brought before it. The custom in recent years has been to look after other legislation first and then have Called Session for appropriations. I am of firm conviction that we should first look for interest of our departments of State Government and our State institutions and am frank to say, that with the great assistance which the Board of Control offers, our Appropriations Committee should, in two weeks' time or less have bills before you for your consideration. I want this to be a working Legislature, and let us not stay in session three days in the week, nor four days, nor five days, but six days in the week, and devote our time to the performance of the work we were sent here to do until it is completed.

I wish to discourage the practice of introducing the same bill at the same time in both Senate and House. This practice not only is more expensive in manner of printing, but necessitates more time to be consumed by the committees, of bills that are often killed in one house before reaching the other, as each bill has to be considered by committee, and why not wait until the bill is passed in one house before the committee in the other branch is burdened with its consideration? I predict, judging from other sessions, that over one thousand bills will be introduced in the House, and if the custom above referred to is discontinued, this number will be reduced at least three hundred. Many bills creating independent school districts have heretofore consumed much time in the House. I believe that all independent school districts under twenty-five miles square could be and should be created by the county board of education in their respective county, who are not only familiar with needs of each district, but with necessary boundaries. Perhaps the Constitution forbids, but would be a great thing if special road laws could be handled by the commissioners courts

of each county. A constitutional amendment to expedite and shorten such matters would be feasible.

This great number of bills will, of course, cover great ideas and ideals. Many will be presented to which you and I have given no thought before we came here and some will perhaps be passed that you and I may wish had not been passed, when we leave here. But you have personal control over such matters.

The platform adopted by the Democratic Convention at Fort Worth demands that we submit to the people of Texas a constitutional amendment providing that none but American citizens, either native or fully naturalized, be allowed the right of suffrage in this State.

The interests of agriculture deserve more attention at our hands. The farms of Texas afford homes and employment for the larger part of our people, and furnish the greatest part of our products. Something must be done to make rural life more attractive and the occupation of farming more profitable. Show me a community of happy, prosperous and thrifty farmers and I will show you a community of happy and contented people. As the government lights our coasts for protection of the mariners and for benefit of commerce—so should our State give to the tillers of the soil the lights of practical science and experience.

Our manufactures are rapidly making us industrially great and are opening to capital and labor new and profitable fields of employment. This steady and healthy growth should still be maintained and encouraged.

Again, a due regard for the interests and prosperity of all the people, demands that the finances of our State shall be established upon such a sensible, sound and suitable basis as shall continue the safety and confidence of business interests, invite rather than repel capital, make the wages of labor commensurate with services rendered, and that our system of revenue shall be so adjusted as to relieve the people of unnecessary taxation, having a due regard for the interests of capital invested and workingmen employed in industries in our State and preventing the accumulation of a surplus in the Treasury to tempt extravagance and waste.

With an anticipated balance of seven million dollars in the Treasury on September 1 next, yet we are paying the

sum of \$135,000 annually or \$360 per day interest on State indebtedness of approximately four million dollars. Three million dollars of this amount is held by the permanent school fund bearing interest at 3 to 5 per cent, while at the same time the State Board of Education has over \$1,000,000 in school bonds being offered them and they can not accept for lack of funds. Sound business judgment should prompt us to reduce the State's debt and stop the interest while we have the money and permit the State Board of Education to purchase all the school bonds offered it, as approved in the usual way, and at the same time receive over \$15,000 more interest per annum per million dollars than now receiving from the State and think of the amount that would be saved by the school districts scattered throughout most every county in the State that today are having to discount their bonds from eight to fifteen per cent in order to sell them to outside buyers, because the State Board of Education has no funds with which to cash them.

The Democratic platform also reminds us of other grave and important matters such as regular redistricting of the State into congressional, senatorial and representative districts, conforming to provisions of the Constitution, a question of great importance to us all, and in forming such districts no member should allow his personal or political ambition to govern him; the reform of judicial procedure, which has been often undertaken, but not yet fully accomplished; proper legislation for good roads and highway construction; the conservation and reclamation of our natural resources; the encouragement of the creation and operation of warehouses and markets; such action in strengthening the plans and such support as may be necessary to maintain and consistently advance the proper activities in the public health and sanitation of our State. Let it be known to the world that we will look to the eradication of contagious and destructive diseases among the innocent children of our State as well as to the eradication of the tick among our cattle. Good health, proper sanitation and good education are the spokesmen of good citizenship. The enforcement laws of the Prohibition Act should be so amended as to bring about complete destruction of the 1000 "moonshiners" in our State, and suitable appropriation for enforcement of same you should pro-

vide; our divorce laws changed in some way to check the many thousands of unhappy marriages and equally as many divorces.

Never has our State done so much for the cause of education as the past two Legislatures. During this period sixty-three million dollars have been devoted to the cause of education by our State. Still we are not keeping pace educationally with our commercial progress. The adoption of the amendment last November will enable local communities to help themselves, yet we should continue to encourage them by proper appropriations. I want to see all our higher institutions of learning, the University, the A. and M. College and all its branches, the College of Industrial Arts, our several Normals, the Deaf and Dumb Institute, and our State School for the Blind, and the educational work fostered in all our eleemosynary institutions, made as good as any if not better than any of their kind in the United States, so that no ambitious son or daughter of Texas need go beyond its borders for highest training along any line. The total enrollment in all the normals of our adjoining State, Oklahoma, is given as 1,525, yet we have one State normal in Texas that has alone an annual enrollment of over three thousand. The fact that over 1,200,000 children, striving and struggling for an education in our rural and public schools, and that over fifteen thousand bright, intelligent, and ambitious and noble young men and women are in daily attendance in our State schools eagerly seeking best education our State can give—should lift our buoyant spirits to the summit of enjoyment and prompt us to see that every encouragement possible at our hands is given them. The people of Texas have plighted their honor to further develop the magnificent public school system of this State, including its higher institutions of learning, and truthfully declared that our people are the champions of that higher civilization which can only be attained by a general diffusion of knowledge.

In the city of Washington there is a monument 55 feet wide at its base, towering 550 feet into the air; in it there is a stone tablet from every nation in the world. It stands as a silent sentinel, commanding the respect and reverence of all passersby, commemorating the valor, heroism and statesmanship of one of our nation's greatest benefactors, George Washington. In

fancy I see a monument being erected on the soil of Texas, its base covers the borders of Texas, its height is unmeasurable; it has been under construction for over seventy years; I see the foundation was laid out by the genius of Moses Austin, who sunk the germ of American institutions in the soil of Texas; the placing of the first stone was bequeathed to Stephen Austin, his immortal son, who administered the original colony with such firmness as to secure the permanency of American occupation; later, when the Teuton faced the Latin, in the struggle for world dominion, the tragedy of the Alamo, the massacre of Goliad, these heritages of eternity, placed upon the foundation, tablets bearing the names of Houston, Travis, Crockett, Bowie, Fannin, Milam, and all the others from whose blood a new republic rose, and a glance at these tablets will recall memories that will be cherished wherever freedom has a temple and glory has a shrine. I see another tablet, a little higher up, bearing the inscription, "The Republic of Texas," commemorative of its place among the nations and the progress of independence which it exercised for a decade; then another tablet, the "Admission of Texas" to the American Union, which recalls the signal of a renewed contest which began with adoption of American Constitution and found no solution but war; I see countless stones commemorating the valor and heroism of her 9,000 sons who marched beneath the banner of the Southern Confederacy along by the side of Robt. E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, those twin divinities of courage and constancy in that mighty struggle; I see hundreds of names, carved in undying letters of those sons of Texas who sailed upon the high seas in the war with Spain after Cervera and crept through the swamps of Cuba after the greedy Toral; the vision grows, I see countless stones telling of our progress commercially, the outgoing of the Indian, the incoming of the railroads, the many advancements made along educational lines, a University, a college, a normal, many schools and other institutions for the helpless and unfortunate; then I count the facsimile of six different flags under which our State has struggled—this monument so high that it is seen by all the other States and on its top, barely dry, is the mortar, I see countless tablets commemorating the valor and heroism of the 245,000

gallant young Texans who offered their lives for the cause of freedom and liberty of the world; I notice 2,000 tablets of gold, symbolic of those 2,000 heroic young men who died on foreign land as conquerors of Germany and heroes of the world war—above all I see floating side by side at the pinnacle of this monument, the Lone Star flag and the Stars and Stripes of Old Glory forming a halo of glory above all the heroic dead and great achievements of the benefactors of this great State. Let our highest aim be to protect the sacred honor of Texas, which has been bought by the sacrifices of so many illustrious men; our one ambition to contribute some credible and lasting tablets to this monument—the History of Texas, which has won the admiration of the entire world, to secure the prosperity of her people and may our coveted reward be the gratitude of a happy and patriotic constituency.

Let us be men of country, not party; of principles, not personalities; of convictions, not politicians; and with the assistance of God we shall accomplish useful if not great things. Reverently let us invoke the God of our pioneers to guide and protect us in our efforts to perpetuate the principles which by His blessing they were able to vindicate, establish and transmit to their posterity; and with a continuance of His favor, ever gratefully acknowledged, we may hopefully look forward to success, to peace and prosperity. I trust that no deed of mine as your presiding officer, will detract from the luster and glory of that Lone Star banner; no act of this Legislature will stultify its precious folds; no move of mine will cause it to droop in sorrow, drag in shame or trail in dishonor.