

# Proceedings of the Republican National Convention

The republican national convention of 1912 convened at Chicago at 12 o'clock, June 18th. It was a turbulent body. The convention was called to order by Victor Rosewater of Nebraska, acting chairman of the republican national committee.

It was war from the start. The Roosevelt men wanted to bar out at once what they called the "stolen delegates." Following are extracts from the Associated Press report:

Chairman Rosewater ruled that until the national committee had presented the temporary roll, made up from the credentials from the individual states and districts with its judgment upon contests, there was no convention; the gathering was a mere mass meeting; nothing could be done until a preliminary organization had been effected by the selection of a presiding officer. He held that no business was in order save the choice of such an officer. He said he had no desire to be arbitrary in his rulings and would allow twenty minutes to each side to present arguments.

These arguments were presented by Governor Hadley and ex-Governor Fort of New Jersey on the Roosevelt side and by Representative Payne of New York and ex-Representative Watson of Indiana in behalf of Taft. After the arguments, Chairman Rosewater renewed his ruling that nothing was in order but nominations for temporary chairman. He presented the national committee recommendation of Senator Root and asked for further nominations.

The Roosevelt men made no further opposition to the ruling and the roll call began at 3:15. The name of every individual delegate was called and it consumed three hours; yet every step of the proceedings was heard with the keenest interest.

Mr. Roosevelt sprung a surprise by not putting up Senator Borah as a candidate for temporary chairman. Instead of that he supported McGovern of Wisconsin, a La Follette man. The Wisconsin delegation split on this and twelve of the Wisconsin delegates refused to vote for McGovern. It was said that the Wisconsin delegation had met the night before and agreed not to put up a candidate for temporary chairman. After McGovern was defeated by Root, Henry F. Cochems, a Wisconsin delegate who had named McGovern for temporary chairman resigned as a member of the Wisconsin delegation. Cochems issued a sharp attack on La Follette, accusing the Wisconsin senator of having pursued "a selfish and perversely narrow policy."

Concerning the fight for temporary chairman, the Associated Press says: The Roosevelt men did the best they could; demanding the omission of the name of every delegate objected to on the ground that he had been improperly seated by the national committee. The roll call went on mercilessly, at times amid deafening confusion. The shifting of the vote made a dramatic scene as cheers greeted one vote after another. With Oregon's three for Root and six for McGovern the net plurality for Root stood at thirty-six, but Pennsylvania's sixty-four for McGovern threw the balance the other way and the advantage remained with McGovern until Tennessee was reached. Then the Root advantage reappeared with a net plurality of ten and from then on the margin in Root's favor increased. With the vote of Patrick Hallanan of Washington, cast for Root at 5:25 p. m., the total vote for the senator reached the necessary 540, and Taft victory—at least in the matter of the temporary chairman—was assured.

Aside from the absence of the "rough house" tactics that had been prevented by the police guard and the extraordinary pains of the national committee officers to guard against outbreaks of any kind, there were several remarkable things about the convention. It was desperately serious from the beginning to end. There absolutely was none of that long-continued uproar which lately has become a feature of political conventions. On the contrary, there was a marked tenseness and an atmosphere surcharged with watchfulness.

Well known leaders came into the hall unnoticed; there was an entire absence of applause by state delegations for "favorites." The crowd gathered somewhat slowly and save for the music of the band, there was nothing but the undertone of conversation.

After Root's election, when he came up on

the platform, the welcome to him lasted thirty seconds. When he began his speech, Pennsylvania showed its bitterness with jeers and caustic remarks that went far to discount the cordiality of his reception.

There was one promise of real trouble when Former Senator Flinn compelled the repetition of the call of the delegates, fighting the vote of an alternate who he said was being called out of proper order. The point was that the man called and who voted was the second on the list for Root, whereas the man first on the list of alternates from that district would have voted for McGovern.

"If you steal that vote," shouted Flinn, "there will be no roll called in this convention today."

That was all there was to it. The chairman overruled him, and the grinding voice of Secretary Gleason went on rolling out the vote.

With few exceptions, the negro delegates from the south about whose steadfastness there has been much speculation, stood fast for the Taft candidate.

When Senator Root began his keynote speech people in great numbers began to leave the hall. He announced that he would suspend until those who wished to go had retired. Thousands then left, but most of the delegates remained and listened to the speech with an interest very noticeable. Even those who had fought his election stayed through and heard him to the end.

When Senator Root finished amid long continued applause, pursuant to an agreement between the leaders of the factions, the whole business of appointing committees and other proceedings went over until tomorrow.

Senator Root entered into a long discussion of the party's history and achievements, laying particular stress on the accomplishments of the Taft administration. He paid much attention to the Panama canal, the tariff commission, and to a review of laws passed by the last two congresses.

He closed as follows:

"With a deep sense of duty to so order our country's government that the blessings which God has vouchsafed to us may be continued, we can be trusted to keep the pledge given to the American people by the last republican national convention.

"The republican party will uphold at all times the authority and integrity of the courts, state and federal, and will in every instance insist that their power to enforce their process, and protect life, liberty and property shall be preserved inviolate."

## EVEN THE POLICE WERE NERVOUS

Policemen at every corner, at every door and in every aisle were the distinguishing features of the scene at the coliseum at the early hours before the doors were opened to the ticket holders.

The nervous tension due to general expectation of tumultuous scenes "from the drop of the hat" at the opening of the republican national convention was very apparent on all sides.

The police were as nervous as anybody else. It was difficult to force people with proper tickets, including newspapermen to get into the hall. Assistant sergeant-at-arms, doorkeepers, ushers and other subordinate officials were so keenly alive to the possibilities that their hands trembled as they took tickets and ushers showed people to their seats with furtive glances about them, as if there were something explosive just under their feet.

Along the front rows between the body of delegates' seats and the platform, a solid row of uniformed police as early as 9:30 a. m., sat waiting for—nobody knows what.

Last touches by the carpenters mingled with an obligato of hammers and a buzz of conversation, forerunners of the heavier hammering promised when the convention began.

A significant arrangement was the cutting off of the usual access to the platform from the floor of the convention hall. Several assistant sergeant-at-arms were stationed on the steps with orders to let no one upon the stage.

This was said to be a precaution against a possible rush.

Chairman Rosewater, it was announced, had agreed to recognize only Governor Hadley of Missouri as the representative of the Roosevelt people.

The divine blessing was invoked by Rev. Father Callahan of Chicago. Secretary Hay-

ward then read the formal call for the convention.

The moment the call was completed Governor Hadley of Missouri, the Roosevelt floor leader was on his feet.

"Mr. Chairman," he called out.

"The chair recognizes Governor Hadley of Missouri," said Chairman Rosewater.

"Mr. Chairman, I rise to a question of information," said Hadley. The governor was beckoned to the stage and made his way there amid applause.

James W. Watson of Indiana, Taft floor leader, followed him. In the meantime William Barnes, jr., of New York, was on his feet.

"I make a point of order," he shouted, but was not recognized.

Governor Hadley then stated his question which involved a substitution of the roll of delegates prepared by the Roosevelt forces for the temporary roll prepared by the national committee.

"I rise to inquire whether the national committee has framed for this convention a proper temporary roll," said Hadley.

James F. Watson, Taft floor leader, interrupted, saying:

"Mr. Chairman, I make the point of order that nothing is in order before this convention until it has been organized."

Both Hadley and Watson were cheered as they stood on each side of the chairman's table, facing each other.

"I rose to a question of information," answered Governor Hadley, "preliminary to making a motion. Until I have made that motion there was nothing to make a point of order against. I still have the recognition of the chair."

Again cheers broke out.

Governor Hadley then presented his formal motion to take from the temporary roll the Taft delegates and substitute the Roosevelt delegates in certain contested states.

Mr. Watson renewed his point of order before the list was read.

"The point of order seems to be well taken," said Rosewater, "but if the governor will address himself to the point of order, we will hear him for twenty minutes, notwithstanding it is arbitrary."

Governor Hadley called to the platform Governor Deneen of Illinois and Former Governor Fort of New Jersey.

Representative Sereno E. Payne of New York was summoned to the stage by the Taft forces. As each of the champions took the stage a round of cheers swept the hall.

Governor Hadley stepped to the front of the stage and began his arguments.

Governor Hadley briefly announced again his motion and the fact that Rosewater had ruled that a point of order against the motion seemed to be well taken.

"I assert," he began, "that the question is whether the national committee of the republican party has the absolute power to form a temporary roll for this convention, which can only be changed by a report from a committee of this convention, or whether this convention itself shall say who shall sit in it. If it is in the power of twenty-seven men to say who shall sit in this convention arbitrarily and without appeal, then we have reached the end of representative government in this country."

A round of cheers greeted this attack on the national committee. The delegates listened with quiet attention.

"We know but one government in this country," he said, "government by a political party. If a political convention can be controlled by a group of men within the party, then have we established a political oligarchy; then have we given a few men control over party and conventions?"

Governor Hadley said he had ample precedent for the action he demanded.

"In 1864," he said, "the convention, on its own right to conduct its own business in its own way, overthrew the national committee's selection of a temporary chairman.

"That convention declared that the national committee was the servant, not the master of the people in the party.

"I offer you, Mr. Chairman," continued Hadley, "the precedent of the convention of 1864, which for a second time nominated Abraham Lincoln. I call your attention to the statement of Senator Hoar at that time that a motion to