

THE FRONTIER

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THE NEBRASKA SCENE

by James R. Lowell

Politics will be the chief business of the political-minded folks of Nebraska from now until after the general election, with the republican nominee for president, Governor Landon of Kansas, officially opening the republican campaign in a speech at Grand Island this Thursday.

The present status of politics in the state in mid-August may best be summed up in a number of quotations from the political great and near great:

Governor Landon, starting his first eastward campaign swing from Denver across the state of Nebraska: "There can be no real recovery as long as men and women must lean on relief."

Senator Edward R. Burke, Nebraska democratic national committeeman, speaking at a democratic rally in Omaha: "The administration has in large measure acted along the line of its clear duty. Measures for relief must be carried out as long as the need remains, altho unwisdom administrative methods need to be ironed out. However, there can be no permanent recovery in this country until the federal government shows a sincere willingness to co-operate with private industry and enable it to absorb the millions of unemployed."

Burke, speaking from Omaha in reference to the democratic suggestion that he resign as national committeeman: "I think that a national committeeman probably should go down the line for the entire party ticket and frankly I do not want to take one iota of responsibility for the election of Carpenter (democratic nominee for U. S. senator). Perhaps I should resign from the national committee position."

Frank McGrath, clerk of the district court at Omaha and campaign manager for Carpenter: "A national committeeman is like a press agent for a circus, and what would happen to a press agent who went around the country telling people the circus is a great show except for the main act."

Dan V. Stephens, of Fremont, former democratic congressman and present Norris supporter: "Burke is of more value to Landon's campaign than any campaign advocate Landon has in Nebraska, with due apologies to Sam McKelvie and Bob Simmons. It is unfortunate that a man in Burke's position should inflict repudiation upon the man he was chosen to support with nothing more tangible than hot air. Burke should resign as national committeeman."

Terry Carpenter, anent the same subject: "Ed Burke ought to resign as democratic national committeeman and come out for Bob Simmons and make a real issue out of it. I think I ought to be national committeeman for Nebraska."

Former Governor S. R. McKelvie, speaking at a republican rally in Butler county: "What America needs today is not administration policies of a guinea pig combined with personal aggrandizement but a return to the age old customs that always have brought us out of our periods of depression."

Miss Harriett Elliott, prominent educator in South Carolina and democratic national committee speaker, addressing a democratic rally at Lincoln: "The last four years of government have placed human factors before profit for the first time. The administration is going before the country to stand on its record of achievement. We need not be alarmed because we have made use of national credit to fight depressions, to feed and clothe the needy, to aid the farmer and laborer."

PROMISES and PERFORMANCE

Promise

EXTRAVAGANCE

"We advocate an immediate and drastic reduction of governmental expenditures by abolishing useless commissions and offices, consolidating departments and bureaus, and eliminating extravagance, to accomplish a saving of not less than 25% in the cost of federal government."

"For three long years I have been going up and down this country preaching that government . . . costs too much. I shall not stop the preaching . . . Franklin D. Roosevelt, Acceptance Speech, July 2, 1932. "That (the Hoover spending), my friends, is the most reckless and extravagant pace I have been able to discover in the statistical record of any peace-time government anywhere, anytime."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Pittsburg, October 19, 1932. "You are having the most economical federal administration you have had for years."

General Farley, Salt Lake City, August 1, 1934.

benefit payments. These payments, however, to be made without bureaucratic administration, without political influence and patronage."

H. R. Tolly, national AAA administrator, speaking at Kearney: "This drouth and that of 1934 have made farmers think and plan more for the future than they have ever done before. They are now planning as the administration is planning, for the agricultural conservation program of 1937. Crop insurance would provide social security for farmers."

Engineers not embroiled in factional disputes agree that irrigation in the Tri-county area would be beneficial to the state as a whole, but litigation as instituted promises to be endless.

Division of one water shed to another was apparently decided by the supreme court but various irrigation districts in the Platte Valley now are raising another question in which they claim that irrigation of Tri-county areas, even tho they be in the Platte watershed, will curtail their irrigation activities. There is a probability that this will have to be settled, altho scientific measurements show that the Platte loses enough water during highwater periods to irrigate a territory larger than that being promoted by Tri-county. Impounding the water is the chief difficulty.

While legal battles of Tri-county are still smouldering, engineers have gone ahead with phases of the project not hampered by court decisions. The huge Keystone dam is the salient feature of this development.

Because a failure of the dam, which will impound 2,000,000 acre feet of North Platte river near the town of Keystone, would imperil the lives of thousands of persons, Tri-county officials are making stability the first consideration in its construction.

The dam will be two miles long and 162 feet high at the highest point. There will be a 24-foot roadway along the top. The reservoir when filled will cover 25,000 acres.

Function of the dam will be to catch flood waters of the North Platte river that rush down from the Colorado mountains during the spring. Tri-county will not be allowed to store water in the reservoir during the irrigation season, when all direct flow rights are appropriated.

The legal situation in connection with the Tri-county is complicated by the claims of the Platte valley backers who say that the Keystone and Plum Creek reservoirs will make the Platte a dry stream from North Platte to Kearney, and lower the water table. Tri-county answers that it already is a dry stream with lowered water tables, and that the reservoirs will recreate the river into a constantly flowing stream and in time the water tables will fill up again.

The Platte valleyists reply that seepage and evaporation will make this impossible. The courts must decide eventually which is right.

Performance.

EXTRAVAGANCE

In the last full fiscal year (1932) of President Hoover's administration the Federal government spent \$5,153,644,895. The New Deal increased this rate of spending as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Year, Amount. Rows include 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936.

The cost of running the United States government in recent years: 1927 \$3,372,713,000; 1931 4,091,597,000; 1932 5,153,645,000; 1933 5,142,954,000; 1934 7,105,050,000; 1935 7,375,825,000; 1936 8,879,798,000

(House hearings on Revenue Act of 1936, except the 1936 figure which is from Daily Treasury Statement—unrevised—of June 30, 1936.)

Government expenditures in 1936 would have been \$3,855,233,671 if there had been a reduction of 25% in the cost of Federal government from the 1932 level.

Lincoln. Harry Scott, former secretary of the state central committee, will be in charge of Griswold's headquarters. Mr. Griswold is one of the best bets of the republican organization where speeches are concerned, and he will make an intensive campaign speaking tour during the campaign.

Incidentally, Mr. Griswold has secured a reputation as one of the state's finest citizens. He has everything that it takes to be a governor, except the reckoning of the political prognosticators who list the prospects as follows:

(As for Nebraska): Landon, first (no use of mentioning second man); Cochran for governor; Jurgensen for Lt. Governor; Simmons for U. S. Senator (Carpenter second and Norris Third); Dick Johnson for attorney general; Bass for state treasurer; and the rest wide open.

The National Union for Social Justice will call a state convention soon and attempt to get 750 persons to sign petitions to have Wm. Lemke's name printed on the presidential ballot in Nebraska.

Balked by an opinion of the attorney general that presidential electors cannot be nominated by petition, the socialist party will attempt to hold another state convention in an effort to get on the Nebraska ballot in November.

Assistant Attorney General Vail, in a formal opinion said Nebraska laws do not provide for placing names of presidential electors on the ballot by petition nomination.

Party leaders at the instigation of national, socialistic officials, undertook the petition plan after a convention held here last month failed to produce the necessary 750 signers.

State Capitol News in Review: Farm fires took a loss of 55 per cent of the value of the property involved against a loss of only 3.4 per cent in urban fires during the first half of 1936. However, town fires accounted for a much larger share of the state loss than was discernable in the total figures.

County numbers on Nebraska motor vehicles would be altered in all except four of the first twenty counties if the designations were to be made on the basis of registrations found in the 1936 assessment returns, a tabulation of valuations reveals.

Present county numbers were set up in 1923 by a ruling of the motor vehicle division of the state highway department, based on the registrations in the various counties at that time. Several attempts have been made to change numbers to conform to later registrations, but the departments have avoided such alterations.

Here is the way the counties would rank now, in accordance with population: No. 1, Douglas; No. 2, Lancaster; No. 3, Gage; No. 4, Scottsbluff (instead of Custer); No. 5, Hall (instead of Dodge); No. 6, Dodge (instead of Saunders); No. 7, Buffalo (instead of Madison); No. 8, Madison (instead of Hall); No. 9, Adams (instead of Buffalo); No. 10, Custer (instead of Platte); No. 11, Saunders (instead of Otoe); No. 12, Otoe (instead of Knox); No. 13, Richardson (instead of Cedar); No. 14, Saline (instead of Adams); No. 15, Platte (instead of Lincoln); No. 16, Lincoln (instead of York); No. 17, Seward; No. 18, York (instead of Dawson); No. 19, Dawson (instead of Richardson).

stead of York); No. 17, Seward; No. 18, York (instead of Dawson); No. 19, Dawson (instead of Richardson). Newcomers in the first twenty are Scottsbluff (now 21 in rank), and Saline (now 22). Knox and Cedar, 12 and 13 under the present system, would drop to 23 and 25 respectively.

STATE TAXES

Governor Cochran received a great deal of favorable publicity last week, due to the fact that the State Board of Equalization fixed the new levy for state taxation at 1.76 mills, a considerable reduction below last year's level. The Governor then proceeded to take credit for this reduction, by talking of reduced expenses and appropriations, and the fact that it will be the lowest levy in 15 years, made it very nice publicity for him.

The facts are that the expenses and appropriations of the state of Nebraska are this year the highest in the history of the state, but the money is simply not being raised by a property tax. It all comes from the taxpayer, but by far the largest part of it is in the form of these "painless" taxes, so that the taxpayer pays the bill without knowing anything about it. The only reason that the state property tax is lower is because the state is now raising about a million and a half dollars per year from liquor taxes, and that consequently reduces the taxes against property. But the major portion of the increased tax burden is being carried by the people who drive automobiles, through the additional one cent per gallon tax which Governor Cochran levied against gasoline.

It is not that there is any issue between Governor Cochran and myself over the form of taxation. We agreed two years ago and we agree today that the state of Nebraska should not have a state income tax, a sales tax, or any new form of taxation. The record of Nebraska, under both republican and democratic governors, has been good in this regard, and while the expenses and appropriations of the state have increased tremendously, yet the fact that we have not taken on any of the new-fangled systems of taxation, has caused us to make a very fine record when compared to other states. So really there is no major taxation issue between us—I approve of the levying of the liquor taxes and I am glad that the collection of them made it possible to reduce the property tax levy. I only desire they be reduced still further.

But what about the local tax problem? That is where the real tax burden is. What has the Governor done to remedy that situation and again this year, calls for action in this regard. And what about the conduct of the State Insurance department? Have the buyers of insurance, paying about fifty million dollars per year in Nebraska, been receiving the protection they are entitled to? What about the squelching of the investigation of the state bank reiverships? What about the Governor's refusal to extend an official welcome to Governor Talmadge and former President Hoover? Is that the kind of partisanship that the people of Nebraska desire? And then, what about his statement over the radio last week that "there is no hope for the taxpayer in the election of Governor Landon to the Presidency"?

These and other matters may become issues in the campaign, but surely it is unfair for the Governor and his newspaper supporters to take credit for reduced expenditures by the state because of a reduction in the property tax levy, in the face of a statement by the State Auditor not more than two weeks ago, that the expenses of Nebraska last year were about \$2,300,000 larger than ever before. And they will be just as large this year. The money is being milked from the taxpayer but not through the property tax.

I can only ask, in the interest of fairness that this type of political "hoey" be stopped this early in the campaign. Let the 1936 campaign be fought honestly and cleanly and on the real issues. The form of taxation in Nebraska is not one of those issues.

DWIGHT GRISWOLD.

HORSE SHOW A FAIR FEATURE The horse show has steadily been gaining in popularity as a feature of the Nebraska State Fair and this year promoters of the event are enthusiastic over the increased number of entries from over the state. The horse show is a three night offering and will be held in the coliseum Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights.

BOB SIMMONS SEZ:

"The drouth is making the Nebraska farmer a double loser. He has little to sell, so can gain nothing from the increased prices of farm products. More than that he has become a consumer—he has to buy much of his food, and pay the high prices for it.

"It all brings to the front the question of the relationship of the prices received by the farmer and those which he pays for the things he buys—the need of parity. The problem is to keep farm prices and prices of manufactured goods at relatively the same level, so that when the farmer has to pay high prices for things he buys, he is receiving high prices for things he sells.

"When the depression hit, farm prices were as always, the first to drop, and they dropped lowest. So the farmer has suffered doubly all through the depression by receiving low prices and having to pay relatively much higher ones. Unquestionably this double bad break for the farmer made the depression more severe and prolonged. Since prices were too high for the farmer to buy, factories could not manufacture so much, employees were thrown out of work. When these people were out of work, they could not buy farm products. Loss of buying power for his products kept the farmer's prices down. There again is the vicious circle: less buying power by farmers, less work for labor; less work for labor, less market for farm products; less markets for farm products, continued low farm prices, and so on, and on and on.

"To solve this question of bringing parity to agriculture I suggest first the need for a protective tariff for agriculture, to protect the American market from the products of foreign farms and foreign labor. Then the need to recapture foreign markets for farm products; cooperative effort, soil and water conservation, better methods of distribution, lower interest rates; the commercial use of farm products. But whatever plans are adopted, they must not result in

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decreased employment for labor as does the present plan of scarcity. It simply defeats its own objectives.

"Benefits must be paid also to help to bring about this parity, but without expensive, bureaucratic administration, without political interference and patronage, without inconsistencies and unfairness, and to the operators of the family sized farm only, not to the large corporation operators."

METHODIST CHURCH NOTES Sunday school 10 a. m. Morning worship 11 a. m. Sermon subject, "Redemption." Uniting with the Presbyterian church in the evening at 8 at the

Presbyterian church with Rev. Johnson preaching. Fourth quarterly conference next Monday evening at 8 o'clock at the church. Every member present, please.

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