

Nebraska Drys Organize for Fight

PROHIBITION AMENDMENT

"Be it enacted by the people of the state of Nebraska: That the constitution of the state of Nebraska be amended by adding thereto the following, to be known and designated as article 17 thereof: On and after May 1, 1917, the manufacture, the sale, the keeping for sale or barter, the sale or barter under any pretext, of malt, spirituous, vinous or any other intoxicating liquors are forever prohibited in this state, except for medicinal, scientific, mechanical or sacramental purposes."

[The following extracts were taken from reports of the meeting of the Nebraska Dry Federation, which met in Lincoln, Sept 29-30, as reported by the Nebraska State Journal:]

More than a thousand delegates, three-fourths of them men, gathered in Lincoln September 29-30, to formulate the plan on which the fight for a dry Nebraska is to be conducted next spring and summer. These delegates came from all parts of the state as representatives of organizations which believe in putting the liquor interests out of business. Mayor C. W. Bryan of Lincoln was selected by acclamation permanent chairman of the convention, which met to frame the organization for the anti-saloon fight next year.

Mayor Bryan first welcomed the delegates to what he called the most important convention of recent years in Nebraska; he was then called by acclamation to preside over the convention. He was roundly applauded. Mr. Bryan expressed himself that a program was being mapped out which would sweep everything before it in the campaign.

With 1,400 delegates at the convention rising unanimously in support of a motion to adopt a form of amendment to submit to the people in an effort to wipe out the saloons and the breweries of Nebraska, the campaign was auspiciously started. Contrary to the fears of many there had been no row. It had been a give and take proposition throughout a long committee session where divergent views had to be reconciled. It was a general tendency to sink individual preferences in the convention itself that led to this harmony.

By the form of the amendment as finally adopted, which appears at the head of this column, only regular means of enforcement can be used. It carries no legislative provisions. The liquor business is not declared a nuisance as the Douglas county men desired. It does not prohibit the use of liquor or keeping it in possession for private use as many of the state delegates desired.

The committee of nine men who went over the amendment with great care for several hours decided that in its original form, in which it had been rather extensively circulated by the W. C. T. U. was faulty and indeed unconstitutional. It set a time for the amendment to go into effect contrary to the present constitutional amendment. It contained two sections whereas the new draft contains but one. The committee did not believe the extensive powers in the hands of the governor, as desired by the Douglas county delegation, would stand the tests of the courts, and that was omitted.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

They stand as follows to date, with the chairman having the right to reject any of them in order to spread the committee more widely over the state. The chief purpose was to make the committee distinctly non-partisan:

- Republicans—Ambrose C. Epperson of Clay Center.
 - Democrats—E. O. Kretsinger of Beatrice.
 - Progressives—H. E. Sackett of Beatrice.
 - Prohibitionists—C. C. Crowell of Omaha.
 - W. C. T. U.—Mrs. Mamie Claffin of University Place.
 - Anti-Saloon League—H. F. Carson of Lincoln.
 - Organized Labor—Ed. Ashland of Omaha.
- The socialist representative will be announced later.

In the discussion over the form of the amendment one man, who announced that he was a minister, moved that the word sacramental be stricken out. He did not think a poison should be used in religious rites. He did not get a second. Several shouted "Leave that to the church." Another asked why the gift part had been left out. Another wanted to know how to get a bootlegger who gives a man a drink and then drops a dime on the ground, or just gives it to another man. Another asked why if easier to pass the amendment with the word "gift" omitted the convention did not leave out the word "sale" also.

All these questions were answered. W. F. Dale of Denton getting the most applause when he vigorously declared the dry forces must not hope to win everything in one election, but should get what they can and let the rest come along later.

BRYAN PROMISES HELP

Chairman Bryan read a paragraph from a letter written him by W. J. Bryan in which the latter pointed out that Kansas does not prohibit gifts of liquor, that this would be a small matter anyway, and the convention should not add anything unnecessary to its amendment. The chairman said that his brother intends to put in considerable time in favor of the amendment next year.

The organization committee was also ready to report. Bishop Frank M. Bristol who was to have spoken at night was ill and could not be present, so these reports fitted into the time. The committee had had no trouble in reaching a decision.

The federation is to be non-partisan and to be known as "The Nebraska Dry Federation." Its chief campaign body is to be an executive committee of nine, eight to be named by the chairman of the convention, and those eight to select a chairman for themselves who will be the head of the campaign organization. The eight men are to be selected, one from each of the following organizations: Republicans, democrats, progressives, socialists, prohibitionists, W. C. T. U., organized labor, and anti-saloon league.

Chairman Bryan requested that delegates belonging to each of these organizations meet in the hall after the adjournment and recommend members of the executive committee to him. This was done in part, others were announced the following morning.

ON AMENDED FORM

This most important committee, equal to the resolutions committee of a regular political convention, was composed of the following: R. M. Proudft of Friend, E. L. King of Osceola, C. C. Flansburg and E. J. Burkett of Lincoln, E. O. Kretsinger of Beatrice, A. C. Apperson of Clay Center, Elmer Thomas of Omaha, H. E. Sackett of Beatrice, and M. I. Brower of Fullerton.

Chairman Bryan asked a moment's time to consider the names he would mention, but it did not take him long to make his selections. He did not do as chairmen sometimes do, pull the list from his pocket and read it. The committee retired at once, and so soon as the speechmaking began as entertainment for the delegates Chairman Bryan hurried over to take part in the deliberations. Another committee was appointed to consider the sort of organization that ought to be perfected to conduct the big campaign. The committee was as follows:

- E. Bossemeyer jr., of Superior, S. C. Bassett of Gibbon, W. R. Patrick of Omaha, D. L. Love of Lincoln, and Sidney Stewart of Tecumseh.

FARMERS WITH THEM

A message was received from the national farmers' congress in session at Omaha congratulating the convention on its purpose, wishing it success in its undertaking, and declaring that the congress had ever since its foundation been opposed to the liquor traffic.

Besides this word of cheer which was cheered loudly messages were read from Governor Arthur Capper of Kansas and Governor George A. Carlson of Colorado. Governor Capper declared the results of prohibition are worth working for, that Kansas has never been so prosperous as now and never so satisfied with the prohibition program for the past generation. He was ready to say that prohibition is coming nation-wide so sure as the sun shines. Governor Carlson told of the fight in Colorado and ended: "I do not

believe that Nebraska is a bounden slave to any vice, and am confident she will soon drive from her borders the chief giant of them all." He hoped that "the fight will be carried on without quarter until Nebraska is dry."

While it was spending a little time with nothing to do until the committee reports were made the convention endorsed and congratulated the Lincoln Typographical union for its stand recently on the liquor question. A voice from the gallery suggested a word of cheer for Billy Sunday which was given freely, including a mention of "Ma" Sunday with it. A feminine voice from the concourse of delegates said: "Oh, well, Billy embraces Ma, anyway."

THE PROHIBITION FIGHT

Dr. Perley Baker, superintendent of the national anti-saloon league, spoke for almost an hour on the general subject of the fight against booze, which it is his life work to conduct and direct. He traced the temperance movement from the time a law was passed somewhere limiting any person to seven goblets of liquor at one meal, down to the present time, from the stage where only preachers combated the business to this time when the support is from all classes. He urged the delegates to further the fight by seeking to name good men in their own parties, but failing in this to support the other party candidates if they are good, that is, against corruption and against booze. He charged that the liquor interest not only makes ruffians in the slums but sends them to congress. Underwood and Mann, respectively democratic and republican leaders in congress, used every known method to prevent the prohibition amendment from coming to a vote. And it was its first test. Former United States Senator Blair of New Hampshire, aged and bent until he looked like Father Time, watched proceedings. He had introduced the first joint resolution for prohibition thirty-eight years before. It had taken that long to get a hearing in the national halls of legislation.

Doctor Baker was rather proud of Mayor Bryan and said so. "I wish it would cloud up and rain mayors all over the land like Mayor Bryan," said he. Considerable applause. The speaker stopped and demanded: "What is the matter there, republicans, can't you applaud that?" And he got another round of appreciation.

SOME SPEECHES

The convention did not like to quit. It insisted on some speeches after listening to Mrs. Bess Gearhart Morrison render Henry Van Dyke's "Home Again" and vainly trying to get her to do it again, and after applauding Gaither brothers quartet. Mayor McConaughy of Holdrege told how his town went dry and stayed that way. W. A. Selleck of Lincoln declared that this was the biggest event he had seen in thirty years in Nebraska. A. L. Sutton, candidate for the republican nomination for governor, declared that the liquor interests must be forced to quit.

Elmer Thomas of Omaha sang the praises of Billy Sunday as a prohibition orator and influence. He suggested that efforts be made to get Mr. Sunday to make some speeches in the state next September, and the convention voted to invite him. Mayor Bryan promised to deliver the invitation in person.

Ross Hammond came down from Fremont to declare himself on the side of the drys where he had been for thirty-six years as a publisher of a small city newspaper. It would be no hold-day fight, said he, for he knew something of the resourcefulness of the liquor interests and of the golden pot accessible to them. If they but donated 10 per cent of their net revenues in the state they would have a campaign fund of more than \$100,000. But it is a fight for life and death, and they could and probably would, if necessary, spend an entire year's net revenue, or a million dollars to defeat the amendment.

JUDGE HOLMES SPEAKS

Judge E. P. Holmes of Lincoln, who for many years has been a vigorous and able champion of a liberal policy, read an exhaustive argument in favor of prohibition, and confessed that he had all these previous years been wrong in defending liquor business as an industrial asset.

He appeared, he said, partly to prove that a previous announcement of conversion was not a mere bluff. He had never before made a speech in favor of prohibition nor had he ever appeared before such a convention. He had openly resisted the efforts to make Lincoln a dry city. He believed it would not prohibit, that it would be