

ALASKA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

November 29, 1955

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Convention will come to order (9:00 a.m.). This morning we have with us the Reverend Orland Cary of the First Baptist Church of Fairbanks. Reverend Cary will give our daily invocation.

REVEREND CARY: Our Father, we are grateful for the privileges of this day's work; we are grateful for the night's rest we have just had. We are grateful for this great land that is ours, for the privileges we have of living in a democracy. We are grateful for the work that is being done by the delegates to this Convention. We are grateful for the safeguards that are being set up for this future state regarding the resources of the land, for the people that shall live here in the succeeding generations. We pray that as we do the work that is before us today that we may have the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to lead us and that we may do this work acceptably. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Chief Clerk will call the roll.

(At this time the Chief Clerk called the roll.)

CHIEF CLERK: Fifty-three present, two absent.

PRESIDENT EGAN: A quorum is present. We are very happy to have with us this morning one of America's most distinguished citizens, a man whose abilities and responsibilities are well known to each of us, the man who in 1953, in his capacity of majority leader of the greatest deliberative body in the world, called up the combined Alaska-Hawaii Statehood Bill, steered it through a long and thorny debate and voted for its passage. It is my great pleasure and high honor to present to you the Honorable William F. Knowland, United States Senator from California. Senator Knowland.

SENATOR KNOWLAND: Mr. Chairman, members of the Constitutional Convention and fellow Americans, I am highly privileged to have this opportunity to meet with this Constitutional Convention which is carrying on this most important of tasks. And perhaps this may be the last Constitutional Convention for statehood in our entire American history because our 48 states, of course, are now members of the sisterhood of states, the Territory of Hawaii has already drafted its state constitutional convention, and it is highly unlikely, perhaps at least during our lifetime or our generation, that any other territory unorganized and now under the American flag is apt to be an organized territory for the ultimate purpose of statehood. So this is indeed a historic occasion. It is my first opportunity with Mrs. Knowland to visit this great area of our country.

We have been tremendously impressed not only with the area, the limited time we have had here in seeing a very small segment of your Alaska, but we have been even more impressed with the greatest of all human resources, of course, the people of this great Territory, and I have a very deep conviction -- no one has a crystal ball that can predict with certainty at the precise time that you will come into statehood -- but I have a deep conviction that in the not too distant future this great Territory will join the sisterhood of states. I also have full confidence that within the lifetime of most of those in this room today you will see Alaska not only as a state of the Union, but I think as one of the great and important states of the American Union.

Now, if I could bring you in the brief time I have today, could bring you a message, it would be to not in any sense be discouraged because you have not become a state as yet or that you may not become a state even at the coming session of Congress, though I pledge to you, as I have already to the people of Alaska and the people of my own state, that I shall do everything I can, as the minority leader of the Senate as well as a Senator of the State of California, to expedite action on Alaska and Hawaii statehood. And I hope that at least it will be given favorable consideration at the coming session of Congress. If it does not come then, it will inevitably come in the very near future. Now all of the states almost that came into the Union after the original 13 went through a difficult period. My own state was not an exception, and perhaps I may be pardoned for reading a paragraph or two out of the Congressional Record of some of the things that were said about my own State of California to show how wrong even members of Congress could be.

Mr. John Maquee, 1850 --the state was admitted to the Union on September 9 of 1850 -- had this to say and I quote:

"The inhabitants, I beg pardon, the floating population of every color and nation who happened in California, have since that time clothed themselves with the habiliments of sovereignty and demand admission as one of the states upon equal terms with the others. This whole thing of the sovereign State of California would look better in the pages of the Arabian Nights than in the archives of this body."

Now the Honorable Representative James A. Sedden of Virginia, in the House of Representatives on January 3 of 1850, declared and I quote again,

"A very large proportion of them are mere sojourners, adventurers and wayfarers, roaming over a wild, uninhabited expanse in quest of treasure with which to return to their homes. The right of such a population to establish a state government can surely not be gravely entertained by any. It

is not to be tolerated, and at whatever hazards California ought to be remanded to territorial subordination." Well, of course, since that time my state has grown from a population of some 65 thousand to a 13 and a half millions of people, and it is not beyond the realms of possibility, some Californians feel, perhaps unfortunately so, that by the census of 1970, we will have a population of some 25 millions of people. I think the present pressures of population will undoubtedly make Alaska look even more attractive to some of the Californians who will want to come up into this beautiful country of yours.

I think the great challenge that faces us as free people is how we can do what Americans have always sought to do, and that is, to leave to our land and to our children a better land than we ourselves have found. This has been the objective of Americans ever since we won our independence. It has been the spirit which has helped us to grow from a small colony of three million on the Atlantic seaboard to a great nation of 165 millions of people, the most productive industrially and agriculturally the world has ever known, with the highest standard of living that any people have ever enjoyed. I don't believe we would have had that great growth except under our great constitutional system. The men who drafted our constitution were wise men. They were operating under a divine inspiration, as I believe this great deliberative body is acting under a divine inspiration. They wanted to preserve for themselves and for all posterity the freedom which they had won at so great a sacrifice. Now, they knew the history of the world up to their time. They knew that where the men had lost their freedom they had primarily lost it because of the concentration of power in the hands of a single individual in a national government, and in order to protect their generation and all future generations of Americans, they established our federal republic. They limited the power of the federal government and reserved all other powers to the people and to the states thereof, and in the federal government itself, they wanted to divide the powers so that they could not be concentrated in the hands of a single individual. And in our constitution, perhaps with some significance, they set up three great coordinate branches of the federal government -- the legislative, executive and judicial -- and named them in precisely that same order. Now, if we are half as wise as men who gave us our republic and helped to preserve it in the intervening period of years, we will preserve our federal republic, our constitutional system of divided powers of the federal government, one of limited and specified powers.

I do not believe that even under our constitutional system our great nation could have grown, and I feel certain my own State of California could not have grown under and waiting for a paternalistic government at Washington. I think it has only been that the resources of our area were opened up to

enterprise, the competitive system of free enterprise, has done more to build our country and give our people the high standards of living that we have. It will be very difficult for your own great area to have its ultimate economic development, and, I am sure that those in this room know far better than I, where the federal government is the owner of approximately 90 percent of your land area, it is going to be important that you invite investment of thrift capital. Our own great country developed its railroads, its mining resources and its industry first from the development of capital abroad and then from the development of capital from various parts of the United States of America. Our great neighbor of Canada has shown tremendous progress. It has been making some of the greatest advances of any nation in modern times. I think Alaska has all the background and all the qualities and all the resources to have a development as great as has Canada during the past few years.

I want to say in conclusion that your work is being watched by not only the Congress of the United States, but, I think, by our 165 millions of people. Despite the objections that have come from some people to statehood, I think the overwhelming proportion of the American people expect, and I think ultimately they will demand that both Alaska and Hawaii become states of the American union. Anything I can do in my individual capacity or in my capacity as a minority leader of the Senate of the United States to expedite that day and in the meantime to help you work out the many problems that you have, which in equity, should be worked out with the federal government, I will be prepared to do. I can think of no pledge which as American citizens, regardless of the party we belong to, and after all, some of these great problems facing the world today are American problems -- they are not party problems in any sense of the word -- I think of no pledge we might take as American citizens better than the pledge of Thomas Jefferson, the great architect of the Declaration of Independence, who said, "I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility on every form of tyranny over the minds of man."

(Standing ovation)

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Chair notes there are many distinguished guests in the gallery. At this time I would like to call the attention of the delegates and visitors to the fact that Mrs. William Knowland, wife of the distinguished Senator, is in the gallery, that Governor and Mrs. Ernest Gruening are also in the gallery and that President and Mrs. Patty are with us this morning. (applause) The Chair will declare a ten-minute recess at this time. The Convention is at recess.

RECESS

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Convention will come to order. Does the Committee to read the journal have a report to make at this time? Mr. Doogan?

DOOGAN: Mr. President, there are no errors or omissions in the journal for Saturday November 26. I ask unanimous consent that it be approved.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Mr. Doogan asks unanimous consent that the journal of the 19th Convention day be approved. Is there objection? Hearing no objection it is so ordered and the journal is ordered approved. Are there petitions, memorials or communications from outside the Convention?

SECRETARY: I have none, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Are there reports of standing committees? Mr. Collins?

COLLINS: Committee No. XIII will meet immediately after adjournment in the committee room where we met yesterday.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Committee No. XIII will meet immediately after adjournment. Mr. Rosswog?

ROSSWOG: Committee No. XII, Local Government, will meet at 11 o'clock this morning.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Committee No. XII, Local Government will meet at 11 o'clock this morning. Mr. Riley?

RILEY: Rules will meet immediately after recess in the gallery.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Are there other committee reports? Are there any proposals to be introduced at this time? Mr. Robertson?

ROBERTSON: I have a proposal. It is on the Secretary's desk.

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Secretary may proceed with the reading of the proposal.

SECRETARY: "Delegate Proposal No. 28, introduced by Mr. Robertson, ESTABLISHING THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT."

PRESIDENT EGAN: The proposal is referred to Committee No. XIV, Committee on Resolutions. Are there further proposals?

SECRETARY: I have no further proposals, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Are there any resolutions or motions? Mr. Cooper?

COOPER: I would like to move and ask unanimous consent that Senator Knowland's address be spread upon the pages of the journal in its entirety.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Mr. Cooper moves and asks unanimous consent that the address of Senator Knowland be spread upon the pages of the journal in its entirety. Is there objection? Hearing no objection, it is so ordered. Is there any unfinished business? Is there anything to come before the Convention at this time? Mr. Victor Rivers?

V. RIVERS: I move and ask unanimous consent then that we adjourn until 1:30 to meet our obligation over there.

PRESIDENT EGAN: Mr. Rivers, the Chair, before we adjourn, had two or three remarks to make, if you would not mind holding it. The Chair would like to announce again, that because of the fact that a group of people have been invited from Fairbanks to eat here today it would be appreciated if the delegates would start eating not later than 12:15. Also, that the delegates should assemble here not later than 1:45 in order that they can be on their way to the gymnasium by 1:50, and the adjournment probably should be until tomorrow. Mr. Victor Rivers?

V. RIVERS: Mr. President, then I will move that we adjourn until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

PRESIDENT EGAN: The Secretary has a brief statement to make.

SECRETARY: Mr. President, the University asks the indulgence of the Convention. They do not have sufficient tables and chairs for the seating of the luncheon party today, and they wish to use all tables and chairs from the Convention floor and to move them upstairs as soon as the adjournment is had. The tables will be put back in the same place, but it will be necessary to make some disposition of the delegates' personal things in order to accomplish that this morning.

PRESIDENT EGAN: You have heard the statement of the Secretary. We are certain each delegate will cooperate with the request. Mr. Victor Rivers then asks unanimous consent that the Convention stand adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow. Is there objection? Hearing no objection it is so ordered and the Convention stands adjourned.