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# The JACKSON NEWS

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**GOVERNMENT IN ACTION** - Sen. A. R. Schwartz (standing) handles a hot question during the League of Women Voters legislative forum here Monday. Rep. Neil Caldwell and moderator Mrs. Jack Turner are seated. Part of the overflow crowd is in foreground. (Greenberg-Billingsley Photo)

## Taxes To Hounds, Forum Over Ground

The League of Women Voters' "Legislative Forum" was a great success here Monday night as area legislators explained their votes and positions on everything from retail sales taxes and pay raises to coon dogs that mistakenly chase deer.

A standing room only crowd at the forum kept Sen. A. R. Schwartz and Rep. Neil Caldwell under a steady barrage of questions until League officials forcibly broke up the session shortly after 11 p.m., and the persistent constituents (and equally responsive legislators) kept at it on a "room corner" basis for another 30 minutes.

### Probably Compromise Version

Both men declared the state's financial problems will be cleared up in the coming July 10 special session, probably by a compromise version of a broad-based retail sales tax.

They defended a voter-granted legislative pay raise, replying to a question that you get only what

The county auditor is not an auditor, per se, but actually a bookkeeper, and thus outside audit is needed, Caldwell added.

On his last joint bill with Schwartz to allow 25 percent of county voters to call a recall election for the County School Superintendent, Caldwell explained how the office is being rapidly outgrown over the state, and is already outgrown in Brazoria County.

"Such offices are like tonsils," the legislator said, "When they are no longer needed, they should be removed."

Brazoria County taxpayers spend \$23,000 annually on the useless office, he added, and the cost over the state is \$6 million. "We'll see the day," Caldwell prophesied, "when that \$6 million is saved for the taxpayers."

Caldwell got his troubles over his "coon dog and deer" bill. The bill actually amended an earlier bill, prohibiting chasing of deer with dogs in

quality you pay for, in legislators as well as anything else.

"My phone bill and (automotive) gas bill alone during a session equal the pay raise we received," said Schwartz, who added his phone bill averaged \$150 per month, and he has "worn out a car every session."

"There are several men in my district better qualified than I am to be your senator," said Schwartz. "But none of them will serve because the pay isn't attractive enough."

Both men plugged annual sessions of the legislature. "You can't run a billion dollar business (the state) properly with the board of directors (legislature) meeting only every two years," Schwartz said.

Both men said lots of good legislation died, and some was passed blindly, simply because bills were flying at legislators so thick and fast in the final days of the session they had no time to study them.

#### Accomplished Great Deal

Schwartz and Caldwell said the legislature accomplished a great deal despite failing in regular session on appropriations and tax bills.

Schwartz said 21 of his bills reached the governor's desk, including all those requested by Brazoria County. He mentioned a bill establishing a Gulf Coast school for mentally retarded children, for which site search is now in progress over his district; his controversial county school superintendent option election bill; and a "resolution against resolutions."

Rep Caldwell saved the school superintendent bill by jumping into the breach and passing it in the house after it was called in the absence of the original house sponsor, Schwartz said. That bill can save 1 1-2 million dollars a year over the state, he added.

The "resolution against resolutions", which prevents legislators from "congratulating anyone in their district who lives, dies, or goes anything, the nprinting it in the official record and mailing copies to everyone back home, has saved \$100,000 per session, Schwartz said.

Such economies come hard, Schwartz added with a grin, and explained how, shortly after he passed the resolution, the state and national presidents of the League of Women Voters (with State President Mrs. Glenn Bowler from his home town of Galveston) came to Austin. They wanted their visit memorialized for League information, as thousands of other such visits have been, but Schwartz had to refuse their request. The situation brought an appreciative howl from the heavily League-member audience.

#### Other Legislation

Other legislation listed by Sen. Schwartz was on inheritance taxes; additional mudshell fees to correct "a million dollars Texas was losing every year, compared with Louisiana prices;" stiffer prison sentence for narcotic sellers; and reciprocity act for cut-of-state nurses to help fill 60 vacancies in area hospital facilities.

At one point, Schwartz remarked that everyone is for economy until it affects his area. He cited a proposed cut in Farm to Market maintenance funds, which brought a howl of opposition.

"Texas has the best highway system, and the most underprivileged school system you'll ever see," he concluded.

Caldwell said he, as a freshman legislator, spent lots of time learning, but credited Schwartz with extensive assistance, "instead of treating me like a potential opponent as many senators do their representatives."

Caldwell said the optional school superintendent bill was important, but felt his bill for a Brazoria County audit by a CPA every two years could be more so.

"It's inconceivable to me that a \$2 1-2 million business (the county) can operate without an audit," Caldwell said. He is making no accusations of dishonesty, Caldwell continued, but said history has proven repeatedly that counties get into "sloppy habits if there is no accounting."

Brazoria County. To protect coon hunters, who Caldwell said were being harrassed by JP courts who didn't follow the spirit of the bill, he amended it to have a deer actually be taken by dog hunters before prosecution. The bill was widely and badly misunderstood, Caldwell added, and concluded he should have taken Schwartz's advice and "left those deer and coon dogs alone."

#### Blasted Commission

On question from Nig Raney, News outdoor columnist and a state-wide conservationist, Schwartz blasted the existing game and fish commission as being a "millionaires' round-table" and unreceptive to salt-water area problems.

"They take our mudshell, fishing and boating money and spend it all inland on quail hatcheries and stocking private fish ponds," Schwartz said.

Raney said he'd have to agree with the inland-seashore inequities, despite having personal friendship for commission members, and asked what the legislature could do about the problem. Schwartz said the governor had promised the coastal areas "some relief" on the commission, and if it isn't forthcoming, he's in favor of the legislature exercising its abolishment powers over the commission.

The discussion came over Raney's statements that regulatory powers were needed for the county, so state biologist experts could control game supply and demand. Schwartz and Caldwell said distrust of the commission by the "salt water" representatives has halted granting any such regulatory powers.

Caldwell said he has been suspicious of Commission executive secretary Howard Dodgen since he (Dodgen) removed an Alvin game supervisor for "enforcing the laws against taking of live shell from bays."

Bob Bearman twitted the legislators for voting funds for a Confederate memorial, allowing Lyndon Johnson to make two campaigns, and accepting their salary increase. They defended the pay as reported earlier; and Schwartz said he was opposed to state officials in elective offices seeking other offices while most of their term was unfinished.

Seeking the United States Presidency and Vice-presidency is another matter, he said, and should be each state's right. Neither of them voted on the "Johnson bill", as it was voted before their terms, but Schwartz said he probably would have voted for it, since elections uphold our governmental traditions better than appointments, even if the system is expensive. Caldwell drew a laugh by saying Barman (an active Republican) really didn't mind, because "that's how Tower (Sen. John) got to Washington."

While both legislators insisted they can't vote for a general (taxing everything, with no floor limits) sales tax, they admitted by the same token that some form of "retail level sales tax, exempting certain necessities, such as food, medicine, some clothing, etc.)" is the state's money answer.

#### "No Baby Bottles"

Schwartz said we aren't in such hard financial shape that we need to tax "work clothes and baby bottles," and pointed to more needed taxes on natural gas, which he says was part of the "biggest steal in history," when legislators cost the state an estimated \$60 to \$75 million five years ago by putting an annually decreasing, and wholly inadequate tax on natural gas.

Texas receives the same tax return now on three times the natural gas production of Louisiana, Schwartz added. He said Texas is better off, taxwise, than all but three or four other states in the union, "both individually and industrially."

Both men said they will insist on certain floor limits and exemptions in any sales tax to avoid penalizing extremely low-income families.

Caldwell said he felt more taxes on pipelines moving out of the state are needed, but said he

(Continued on page four)

# Forum . . .

(Continued from page one)  
felt the production end of the oil and gas industry is already overburdened with taxes, adding we have unemployment in Brazoria County now because of "depressed conditions" in oil and gas production.

Both legislators blamed bankers' lobbyists for beating back the governor's escheat (abandoned property) bill, and said banks



have eaten up much of the dormant money on "service charges," and will soon absorb the rest. Schwartz said many bankers who opposed the bill have "been sold a bill of goods," since pipelines and other utilities have much of the money involved, and not the banks.

In answer to a question, Schwartz said it is his personal feeling, unsupported by any direct statement, that Gov. Daniel plans to run for the office again. Both said Daniel is a wonderful man, personally, but not "mean enough" to whip the legislature in line as did former Gov. Allan Shivers.

Schwartz said we are moving, step by step, toward a general sales tax, "not as a goal, but as

an eventuality."

"We fight the battle, one year at a time, as it should be," Schwartz added. "The fight now resolves to," Caldwell concluded, "what exemptions shall we give for a retail sales tax, and what permanent tax shall we place on business (such as pipelines, etc.)" without damaging the business climate of the state."

JULY 25, 1956

# Precinct Demo Conventions Set

A proposal asking the state legislature to set up a special commission to study the Texas state Constitution with a view to revising it will be submitted to the Gregg county Democratic precinct conventions scheduled at various times during election day on Saturday, Mrs. H. B. Velde, vice-president of the Longview League of Women Voters, said here Wednesday.

Precinct conventions on election day are called for in the state statutes to nominate delegates to county conventions and thence to the state convention for control of the Democratic party machinery in the state.

Little activity on behalf of either faction of the party in the county has been noted to date towards encouraging a large attendance at these conventions. Conservative and liberal factions of the Democratic party in Longview worked feverishly during May to encourage members of their factions to attend the May conventions when the control of the Texas delegation to the national Democratic convention was at stake. In the resulting precinct convention, conservative Democrats dominated.

The same number of delegates to the county convention Aug. 4 will be elected by each precinct as were elected for the county convention in May.

Oscar B. Jones pointed out Wednesday that a night meeting of the Longview precinct convention had to be scheduled because both the courthouse and the Longview Junior High school will be used as polling places and such conventions must be held at least 100 feet away from the polls or other hours than the polling hours. Longview's convention will be held at 7:30 p. m. at the county courthouse in the district courtroom.

Judson's convention will be held at 2 p. m. at the Judson High school library; Gladewater's at 11 a. m. at the Gladewater Community Center building; Sabine's at 2 p. m. at the Sabine Community Center building; Elderville's at 7 p. m. at the Elderville Community Center building; Kilgore's at 7 p. m. at the Kilgore High school auditorium; Greggton's at 10 a. m. at the Pine Tree High school auditorium.

FRONT PAGE!

Tom Cook, Jr., conservative leader, got the floor to say that the liberal faction "is going to 'rump' anyway since they haven't got a majority and they're just looking for an excuse." Cook asked for a vote on the report of the resolutions committee thus cutting off debate. The report was adopted by a large majority and then Schroder bade members of his faction to walk to the south end of the gymnasium for a rump session.

The resolutions committee recommended only one resolution and that one bound the precinct's delegation to the county convention to vote by the unit rule.

Trend of the Precinct 7 convention was evident shortly after the opening when a motion to limit debate to three minutes was passed by standing vote. Then followed the nomination of Clayton Wheeler of the conservative faction and Reece Calloway of the liberal faction to serve as permanent chairman of the convention. Wheeler was elected on a standing vote by a majority which appeared to be nearly three to one. The result of the vote was accepted by the liberal faction leader without a roll call and without a head count.

Mrs. Tom Cook, Jr., was named secretary of the convention without opposition and Wheeler then named convention committee chairmen as follows: T. S. Carpenter, credentials; J. V. Robinson, resolutions; J. A. Sessums, nominations.

Elected to represent the precinct as delegates to the county convention were T. F. Gordon, Charles T. Berkau, S. C. Roundell, L. E. Kern, J. D. Davis, Raymond Magrill, Charles J. Seward, T. S. Carpenter, J. V. Robinson, T. K. Frank, James Laster, L. C. Fisher, Arden Waggoner, Jess Butts, Morris Bowen, Clayton Wheeler, E. B. Carrington, I. E. Jenkins, J. A. Sessums and Tom Cook, Jr.

### Gladewater, Pct. 3

At Gladewater community center an hour later, six Gladewater voters held a Precinct 3 convention and named a slate of delegates to the county convention whose political leanings were not made clear at the meeting. Members of both factions of the party, however, are known to be among the Gladewater delegates.

Sam Harris, precinct chairman, was named convention chairman and H. D. Victory was named convention secretary. The 19 delegates named to the county convention to represent Precinct 3 are Sam Harris, Paul Bruce, H.

D. Victory, Wilson Godfrey, George Duckworth, W. B. Strange, Jr., L. E. Long, Tom Kelly, Neil Clark, Ralph Prince, Ross Delay, J. E. Craig, K. J. Preston, Paul Roundsville, Charles McChesney, Dale Brooking, Mark Day, J. W. Uselton.

A resolution proposed by the Longview League of Women Voters asking the state legislature to set up a Constitutional commission to study proposed revision to the Texas Constitution was adopted by the Gladewater convention. The precinct's delegation was instructed to vote as a unit on the resolution but was uninstructed on other matters that may become before the county convention.

### Judson, Pct. 2

At Judson, a slate of delegates was approved composed of both conservative and liberal faction members, although the conservative faction was believed to be predominant. Cecil Storey was named convention chairman without opposition and William Mackey was named convention secretary. Only eight voters attended the meeting.

The 12 delegates elected to represent Precinct 2 at the county convention are Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Storey, L. L. Mackey, Ben Visage, A. C. Anderson, William Mackey, W. C. Mackey, Morgan Henderson, Mrs. B. B. Orr, T. N. Henderson and Miss Cora Mackey.

The convention instructed its delegation to vote as a unit at the county convention.

### Sabine, Pct. 4

An all-liberal slate was named at the Precinct 4 convention held Saturday afternoon at the Sabine Community Center building. Twenty-one voters attended and instructed its delegates to vote under the unit rule at the county convention.

The eight liberal delegates named at Sabine were Tom Middleton, C. C. Willoby, Jess Todd, John Shiel, Tom Lockhart, Cecil Miller, Raymond Williams and Joe Boen. The convention named J. T. Russell as permanent chairman.

### Elderville, Pct. 5

Two liberal faction delegates were named to represent the Elderville precinct. They are D. L. Koger and Mrs. J. E. Hogan. W. G. Mitchell was elected convention chairman.

PASSED IN

Pct I, July 29, 1956  
Longview, also.

Sunday, August 5, 1956

# Warm Up

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Republican and Democratic National committees swapped blows Saturday in warmups for the national conventions just ahead.

The GOP committee's magazine, *Straight From the Shoulder*, struck out at the recently ad-

## Name Kennedy GOP Chairman At Meet Here

R. E. Kennedy, of Kilgore, was named permanent chairman at the meeting of the Gregg county Republican convention held Saturday at 2 p.m. at 313 East Methvin street.

Kennedy and D. L. Irwin, of Longview, were named as delegates to the Republican state convention to be held in Corpus Christi, Aug. 28. Alternate delegates are Mrs. R. E. Kennedy and Mrs. Irwin.

In addition to being named as delegate to the state convention, Irwin was also elected sergeant at-arms of the Gregg county organization. J. A. Shifflette was elected permanent secretary.

The convention passed a resolution instructing the county delegates to vote for Earl Hollandsworth as state committeeman from the third senatorial district and Mrs. Charles Batchelor as committee woman.

Another resolution instructed the delegates to the state convention to vote the county's strength as a unit.

Unanimous approval was given to a resolution requesting something be done about the manner in which poll tax sales are being handled. It requested that the poll tax receipts be sold from official sources only.

Approval was also voted to a resolution submitted by the League of Women Voters urging the establishment of a Constitution commission to institute a research program on the Texas Constitution looking toward bringing it up to date. The resolution pointed out that the original document was written in 1876 and the 121 amendments which have been added to it have brought it to a total of 40,000 words.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF LONGVIEW  
LONGVIEW, TEXAS

August 6, 1956

Mrs. George Bolter  
State Constitutional Revision Chairman  
League of Women Voters  
1067 West 24 Street  
Austin, Texas

Dear Mrs. Bolter,

The enclosed clippings from the Longview News-Journal will show the results of our introducing a resolution at the conventions in Gregg County. We are most gratified that the resolution was adopted in both the Republican and Democratic County Conventions; and that we received some publicity in addition to the fun we had.

Yours truly,  
Franne Urdde  
(Mrs. H. B. Urdde)