

MINUTES OF TEXAS CENTENNIAL COMMISSION
TRICKLIL HOTEL, AUSTIN, SEPTEMBER 24, 1934

President Cullen F. Thomas called the Commission to order at the Trickill Hotel, Austin, at 9:35 a.m., September 24, 1934. Present: Brigg, Brown, Cline, Arnowsorth, Force, Griffith, Hughes, Josey, Middleton, Neal, Ochs, Sharp, Thomas, and Hayes (Secretary), the number not constituting a quorum.

President Thomas stated that the purpose of the meeting was to appear before the Senate at 10 a.m., sitting as a Committee of the Whole, to present to that body on its invitation the reasons for the earliest possible action of the Legislature on an appropriation for the support of the Centennial. He stated that he had tried to have a joint session of both Houses but that this could not be arranged and the Commission would appear before the House of Representatives on invitation at 6 p.m.

R. L. Thornton and Fred F. Florence, of Dallas, having been nominated by the Dallas Centennial Committee for membership on the Commission, were added to the Commission on motion of Middleton seconded by Force, subject to the ratification of a majority of the Commission. Thornton and Florence were introduced as new members and sat with the Commission.

The Commission recessed at 9:45 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. to appear before the Senate sitting as a Committee of the Whole.

IN SENATE CHAMBER,

The Texas Senate convened at 10 a.m. was called to order by Lieutenant Governor Edgar S. Pitts, and President Pro-Tem Cecil Murphy, of Cooke County, was asked by the Lieutenant Governor to preside at the Committee Meeting.

Being introduced by Senator Murphy, President Thomas expressed his appreciation of the introduction and of the opportunity afforded the Commission to present its reasons for asking an early appropriation for the support of the Texas Centennial. He called upon H. L. Ochs, of San Antonio, a member of the Commission, whom he introduced as a leading citizen of San Antonio, long time native, and a patriotic city.

Ochs spoke at some length, emphasizing the importance of celebrating the 100th anniversary of Texas' independence on a religious, educational, financial, social, commercial, and economic basis, as well as for the sentimental reasons that should inspire civilized countries to revere the heroic deeds and the memories of the forefathers. He stated that in winning its independence, Texas had changed the history of the nation and in a large measure the history of the world; that it is the sacred duty of succeeding Texans to tell the world the story of its historic past, its development, its present heritage, and its future possibilities. He urged that the Legislature should not adjourn without making necessary provision for the Centennial or else it should meet in another immediate session for that purpose, stating that San Antonio stands almost solidly with the rest of the State for a creditable Centennial supported by the State government.

President Thomas then introduced Mrs. Sharp, of Houston, as an able, publicspirited citizen, a member of the Commission, devoted to Houston and all Texas as well. Mrs Sharp briefly reviewed the work of the Commission since it was organized June 6, 1934, and stated that although the time is short within which to make ready on the grand scale contemplated, the Commission, if properly supported now by the Legislature,

stands ready to complete its work and have the Texas Centennial celebration open to the public by 1936. She pleaded for a celebration Texan in proportions and stated that Dallas having secured the main celebration, all Texas should be equally interested in its success and also in the historical celebrations to be held over the State during the Centennial year.

President Thomas added that Houston through its Mayor and other representatives, although losing in its fight to secure the main celebration, had pledged its whole-hearted support to make the Centennial a success. He then introduced Walter D. Cline, Chairman of the Centennial Executive Committee, as a gigantic, dynamic, whole-hearted, typical Texan, who would tell the Legislature why it must make provision now to meet the demands of the people of Texas through their votes and party platforms for a Centennial observance of which all Texans could be proud.

Cline told the Legislature of the immense work already by the Commission in carrying out the duties placed upon it by the Legislature itself, and in making adequate plans for such a Centennial celebration as Texas should have. He reviewed the history of the Centennial movement and the relation of the Legislative body thereto, and stated that the Commission had come to the Legislature with its plans formulated as early as those plans could be worked out; that the Commission would be ready to submit its plans at any time the Legislature indicated its readiness to receive them; and that a minimum cash capital of \$15,000,000.00 would be required to do the work effectively enough to attract visitors in numbers to make a success of the Centennial. He stated that the Legislature should appropriate at least \$5,000,000.00, and that with the Dallas bid of approximately \$9,000,000.00 in lands, equipment, and cash, and an appropriation of the amount asked from the Legislature, the Federal Government should stand ready and he believed would be ready to match dollar for dollar whatever legislative appropriation may be made. He added that unless the home fields are concerned, the Federal Government would not be, as the Commission could not go to Congress unless Texas first makes an appropriation. He gave briefly his reasons why the Commission can expect the Federal Government to be as liberal as the State in its support of the Texas Centennial. He stated that Dallas is merely a geographic incident to the Centennial, which should include celebrations also at many historic places whether mentioned specifically in the law or not. Basing his estimate on the tourist business drawn to other states and the visitors attracted to the Chicago Century of Progress, he said that it can reasonably be expected that \$1,500,000,000.00 of new money will be brought to Texas and spent in the State as a result of its Centennial. He spoke of the increased revenue that the highway fund and the school fund would derive from these visitors and of the help that could be expected for them in liquidation of the bonded debt and from the additional taxes received from gas. He urged the Legislature to stay in session about ten days or two weeks to discuss the Centennial problem and to make the necessary appropriation there in a way that would make the forefathers and posterity proud and to get the plaudits of the nation.

President Thomas then introduced R. L. Thornton and Mayor C. P. Turner, of Dallas, both of whom spoke of the economic advantages to be derived not merely by Dallas but by the entire State through the Centennial financed on the scale advocated by the Commission. Mr. Cline stated that while Dallas realized its opportunity and its obligation, it was not unmindful of the fact that the Centennial is to be a Texas observance of history, romance, and economic advancement throughout the entire State, without a parallel in the history of the country.

President Thomas concluded the presentation by emphasizing the fact that the law provides not only for a great industrial and commercial exposition but for historic celebrations that should cover all points of historic interest throughout the State. He pleaded that the Legislature remain in Austin a few days longer "not for Dallas, not for the Commission, but for a great celebration that will make history for our beloved commonwealth."

SECOND SESSION

On invitation, the Texas Centennial Commission met with the House at 3 p.m. Speaker Stevenson introduced President Thomas of the Commission, who presided and, before introducing the speakers, thanked the House for the privilege of appearing before it.

He first introduced Commissioner Sohs, of San Antonio, who stated that the Texas Centennial would be one of history, patriotism, and devotion on the one hand--industrial, commercial, economic on the other, and that the Commission is devoted to all phases of the Centennial and stood ready to present its plans to portray the past, the present, and the future.

Mrs. Farnsworth, President of the Daughters of the Republic and the grand-daughters of Deaf Smith, referred touchingly to the flag of the San Jacinto battlefield back of the Spanish platform that had been restored by the Daughters of the Republic and that in itself should be a forceful appeal to the Legislature to do its utmost in revering the past in a way to revive the spirit and vision that made San Jacinto one of the decisive battles of the world. She stated that the Daughters of the Republic desire to help put over the Centennial so that the world may know that Texans today have the same spirit and loyalty that pervaded their ranks at the Alamo, at Goliad, and at San Jacinto. She pledged the Daughters of the Republic and San Antonio to render every assistance in letting the world know that they love Texas and are anxious to show their love, loyalty, and vision to the entire world.

R. L. Thornton, of Dallas, depicted the economic progress of the State and said that following every depression there is an impulse on the part of numberless thousands to seek new homes in new lands and that the Centennial will come at an opportune time to attract thousands to Texas as this land of a great future. He asked the Legislature to help the Commission now to fulfil the obligations placed upon it by the Legislature itself and without which any celebration would be a discredit rather than a credit to the State.

Commissioner Sharp, of Houston, stated that the Commission is anxious to fulfil the dream of Texas voters and of the Legislature in appointing the Commissioners and wants a wonderful celebration of Texas' birthday. The Legislature has told the Commissioners what it expected them to do, and they stood ready to make a report of their plans and to urge the immediate support necessary for their fulfilment.

President Thomas then presented Walter S. Cline of the Commission, who renewed in a general way the appeal made to the Senate at its forenoon session and urged in a fervent appeal that Texas avail itself now of the one opportunity of a century to attract the attention not only of the nation but of the entire world and to draw to it visitors from all quarters of the globe.