

From

Date

**MR. BURKETT IS VINDICATED.**

Whether vindications are in order before campaign year arrives or not, former Highway Commissioner Joe Burkett has taken time by the forelock and secured his without waiting for the ball to open. The State Road Maintenance Association, which held its second semi-annual session at San Angelo last week, not only adopted a resolution of confidence in the former commissioner and endorsement of his official acts, but proceeded to elect him president of the association in order, presumably, that there be no mistake as to how members of the association present and voting felt about it.

That more than one-half of those attending and voting were state highway maintenance employes who owed their employment to Mr. Burkett, has no bearing on the case. They were actuated solely by a due sense of appreciation of the former commissioner's service to the state in the award of road maintenance contracts. That these contracts were made the basis for charges filed by the attorney general and that in one case the contractors have confessed judgment and returned to the state a large sum of money only makes it more imperative that due notice be given that however else the public may view it those indebted to Mr. Burkett for their jobs think he is all right. And, of course he is. But why did he resign while under fire?

We have no complaint to make of Mr. Burkett's friends voting him a clean bill of health. That their confidence has not been shaken by the disclosures recently made is a tribute to their loyalty to him. It's when clouds gather around and about one and shafts of lightning threaten him with destruction that he needs the sheltering arms of his friends. Fair weather friends are of little comfort if when the waves of trouble roll they make themselves scarce. But confidence expressed by friends, whether under personal obligations or not, falls short of vindicating one who stands under a shadow of improper conduct in office.

When the campaign becomes good and warm next year there is little doubt but what it will center around the one issue of vindication. In 1924 it was the shibboleth that reverberated from Texarkana to El Paso and from Red River to the Gulf. To its awakening cry the masses responded and the judgment was written in the statute books of the state. But it seems the war is not yet over. It will probably be necessary to continue the program of vindication until every one connected with the administration is given a vote of confidence at the ballot box.

Anyway, Mr. Burkett has beat them all to it. He didn't wait until the campaign formally opened. When he discovered how the land lay at San Angelo he acted at once and had his vindication handed to him on a silver platter, so to speak. And with it carefully tucked under his arm he can just tell his critics to go where snow shoveling was never catalogued as an art.