

Speaker Rayburn—Able, Respected Leader

Again it is Speaker Sam Rayburn. There was no surprise in the election of the veteran Texas congressman to preside over the House in the 82nd Congress, but nonetheless his choice for that high and responsible position makes history. Mr. Rayburn becomes only the second member of Congress in the nation's history to be elected to the speakership six times, equaling the record set by the magnetic Henry Clay of Kentucky in the first half of the 19th Century. If Mr. Rayburn serves out his two-year term he will have clear title to the distinction of having occupied the speakership longer than any other man, because Mr. Clay resigned twice as presiding officer of the House.

It is not, of course, length of service which counts, unless that service has been of high order and rendered fully in behalf of his state and his nation. This was achieved fully by Mr. Rayburn. His long tenure as speaker and previously as minority leader in the House attests the high caliber of that service to his nation and state.

The speaker of the House has been a member of Congress since 1913, and previously he was a representative for six years in the Texas Legislature and speaker of its House for two years. In

1948, he and Senator Vandenberg were the recipients of the *Collier* magazine award for distinguished congressional service.

An impartial appraisal of Sam Rayburn's statesmanship was given by Republican Minority Leader Martin upon the Texan's election as speaker Wednesday. Representative Martin declared that the nation in a time of peril was most fortunate in having in responsible position a man who has "the courage, the integrity, the ability and the fairness that he (Mr. Rayburn) has." He pointed out that election six times as speaker would not have been possible without Mr. Rayburn's being a man of fine character and extraordinary ability.

The House affirmed this appraisal in a tribute of standing applause as Mr. Rayburn took the gavel and the office of speaker. In that role, he will serve his nation and state with the same selfless devotion, capacity and zeal that have marked his almost four decades of service in Congress. Texas takes pride in this son who measures up fully to the standard of outstanding Americanism. The humility and firm resolve with which Sam Rayburn accepted a stern responsibility again is a measure of his caliber as a servant of a free people.