

would be no paychecks for House members during the special session. Anti-sessionist Earl Brown from Ardmore forced this issue on December 8 by presenting his claim to the State Auditor. Due to the Supreme Court's ruling on the session, the Auditor had no choice but to refuse payment.

In fact, the executive and judicial branches, following the examples set by the Governor and Chief Justice, were united on that score. After the House organized on December 6, a committee was sent to invite the Governor, as is the custom, to address the House. They were at first unable to locate him, but when they did, he declined to appear before an "illegal assembly." Instead, he gave them a prepared statement in which, Johnston stated:

Fellow citizens: As Governor of Oklahoma, I decline to receive you as a committee. Your body has a legal right to meet as citizens only and not as a branch of a legislative body.

When this statement was read, it nearly touched off a riot in the House gallery, apparently packed with Johnston supporters who shouted "guess that'll hold you!" and "throw them out!" before the Speaker could restore order.

When the Senate resolved itself into an impeachment court, the Chief Justice declined to perform his constitutional duties in the impeachment process. He refused to administer the oath to the Senators or preside over the Senate Court of Impeachment by politely sending word to the Senate that, due to the opinion he had written, he could do neither without violating his oath of office. Therefore, a Senate clerk had to administer the oath.

With the executive and judicial branches aligned against the House, the Senate's attitude towards the special session was critical. From the first, the Senate was aware that the session legality issue would have to be confronted. Nevertheless, it did not at first break ranks with the House. After the Senate voted to go into a court of impeachment, Senate leaders immediately sought the counsel of Attorney General Ed Dabney on the special session question. During the Walton impeachment, the incumbent Attorney General ruled against the Legislature calling itself into a special session. Nevertheless, Dabney was less definitive in his oral guidance. He told Senators that, if asked for a formal opinion on the matter, he would likely render an opinion consistent with the previous opinion and the Supreme Court's recent ruling. Informally, he advised the Senate to be its own judge. With that, sessionist forces in both chambers bought additional time.

Returning to events in the House, the Speaker appointed fifty-two members to the investigating committee. Working quickly, it brought impeachment charges against the Governor, the Chief Justice, and the chair of the Board of Agriculture in mid-December. The committee charged Governor Johnston on a number of counts including issuing illegal deficiency certificates (authorizations used at the time by agencies for funding projects not authorized by the Legislature) for projects specifically turned down by the Legislature, and general incompetence. The most spectacular charge involved an alleged extortion scheme involving Mrs. Hammonds for a payment to another woman. Later, charges would arise from Johnston's next series of moves.

Before the entire House could consider articles of impeachment, Johnston issued a proclamation authorizing his use of the National Guard to put down the insurrectionary situation that

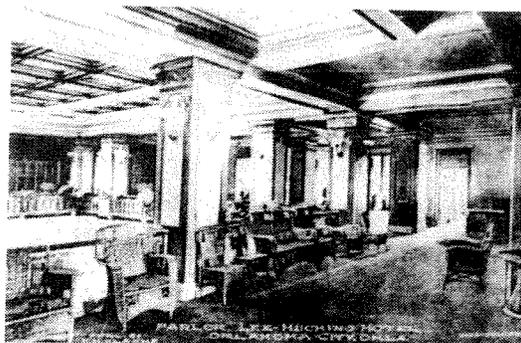
threatened his office. He directed the Adjutant General “to use and employ all necessary force to quell, subdue, remove or destroy such insurrection and to suppress all insurrectionary meetings whether held at the state capitol or at any other place in the state.”

However, Johnston stopped short of imitating Walton’s amassing of a large body of troops to intimidate lawmakers. Brigadier General Charles E. McPherron (a former Senator who ironically served on Walton’s impeachment court) had only seventy troops under his command. They roped off the fourth floor of the Capitol so that the two chambers were unable to meet that day and broke up all meetings of legislators in the Capitol. Despite the small number of troops, the Adjutant General refused to give way to a delegation of anti-Johnston forces headed by Kight, forcing them to retreat to the Huckins Hotel.

However, the previous day’s barricading of the House chamber did not prevent fifty-six House members from slipping into the chamber several hours before dawn the next day to take up the previously filed impeachment articles and a new one for Johnston’s use of the militia to prevent the Legislature from meeting. The articles were passed easily by this “rump assembly.” The vote was 49-6 on the illegal use of the militia and 45-9 on general incompetence. After the vote, a bipartisan nine-member board of managers chaired by Kight was appointed to handle the impeachment.

The focus now shifted to the Senate. At first, Johnston did not impede the Senate from meeting. However, the Senate was immediately confronted by the question of whether its acceptance of the House’s charges would cause Johnston’s temporary suspension. The Senate had suspended Governor Walton at this point in the 1923 impeachment proceedings. This time, the Senate decided against suspension, in part because of the lingering question about the legality of the session and also because of the persuasiveness of Senator Tom Anglin (a future Speaker) who convinced the Senate that suspension of Johnston without a definitive answer to the session question would create an intolerable dual executive situation whereby Johnston and Lieutenant Governor Holloway would both have a claim to be recognized as the state’s chief executive. Nevertheless, it appeared to most observers that the Senate’s action on the matter did not suggest that the Senate would abandon the House on impeachment and would not undermine the House’s agenda.

At this point, Johnston once again took control of the situation. First, he made certain that he would be the one to decide when the Senate would next meet by blocking the Senate chamber with National Guardsmen. Next, he and his supporters installed themselves at the Huckins Hotel where he could effectively use all his powers of persuasion over the Senators who were milling around. Johnston’s strategy worked. By the next morning, Senate sentiment had shifted to a position advocated by Senator Guy L. Andrews of McAlester who believed that the entire House role in the special session had been illegal. Confident of the result when the Senate reconvened, Johnston lifted the National Guard barrier, and the Senate voted 22-16 (including three Republicans who voted with the majority) to the



Huckins Hotel Parlor where Governor Johnston helped persuade Senators to terminate the Ewe Lamb Rebellion

dismay of the insurgent House members that State Question 119 was unconstitutional and that the House had no inherent right to convoke a special session to exercise its impeachment authority. Ironically, the Senate reserved to itself the power to use that right to meet and then call the House into session to perform its investigation impeachment role! With that, the Ewe Lamb Rebellion collapsed. A next day's headline reported: "Unhorsed, unhonored, unpaid and hamstrung, the rebel leaders and insurrectionists returned to their homes."

The Shortest Speakership and the Only Coalition Speaker

By the time the Legislature was prepared to meet for the 1929 regular session, Governor Johnston's political fortunes had plunged to the point that it appeared not even the mystical powers of his secretary could save him from removal from office. The 1928 presidential election certainly was a major factor in the deteriorating political situation that the Governor now confronted. Republicans in Oklahoma benefitted immensely from the poor performance of the Democratic presidential campaign of Al Smith. Johnston, perhaps unwisely, had put his prestige on the line in stumping for Smith. As a Catholic and a supporter of ending national prohibition, many Oklahoma Democrats voted Republican from the top to the bottom of the ticket. As a result, Republicans gained twenty-six new seats in the House of Representatives.

With a total of forty-seven seats, Republicans were only five votes short of the majority. Moreover, anti-Johnston Democrats, several of whom were angry that the Governor had attempted to defeat them, had generally fared somewhat better than pro-Johnston Democrats in the election. It was no surprise that a number of the anti-Johnston Democrats were more determined to remove Johnston than before.



*Eight of the "irreconcilable" Democrats.
From front left to right: Tom Kight from Claremore; Speaker Jim Nance from Walters; Homer Paul from Pauls Valley; and R. J. Stanley from Hugo. In back from left to right: C. C. Hester from Blanchard; Bob Graham from Oklahoma City; John Head from Idabell; and Frank Carmichael from Sayre*

Therefore, the House Democratic caucus was badly divided as preparations for the 1929 session got under way. While most of the Democrats thought the caucus would still elect the next Speaker, others were plotting with House Republicans for a coalition organization of the House. A small group of "irreconcilable" anti-Johnston Democrats actively negotiated with the Republican caucus for a coalition that would organize the House to impeach Johnston. The leaders of the irreconcilable Democrats were Tom Kight, James C. Nance of Walters, Charles Moon of Muskogee, Homer Paul of Pauls Valley, C.C. Hester of Blanchard, Frank Carmichael from Sayre, and R. H. Stanley from Hugo.

The Democratic caucus selected Allan Street from Oklahoma City as its candidate. He was elected Speaker, but on the opening day of session the irreconcilable Democratic and Republican coalition would not permit the session to pause long enough for the Governor to give his message to the joint legislative session. Instead, they moved to amend House rules to strip the

Speaker of his power to appoint committees and gave the power to a newly created committee on committees whose members were named by the coalition. At that point, Street determined that he would not be able to perform his duties as Speaker. With good humor, he accepted the inevitable and resigned after serving about six hours to the cheers of the party regulars. Tom Kight then nominated Nance for Speaker, who won by a 60-38 vote. In addition to forty-seven Republican votes, thirteen Democrats voted for Nance -- the irreconcilables, the *now* former Speaker Street, and several other Democrats.

The irreconcilables defended their actions to Oklahoma Democrats. They blamed the failed leadership of Johnston and lashed out at him for not allowing a party convention the previous year and trying to revenge himself during the campaigns for the Ewe Lamb Rebellion. Nance concluded that his reason for entering into a coalition with the Republican caucus rather than accepting the decision of the Democratic machinery (Governor Johnston) was: "we promised the people nothing in the campaign, and they gave us nothing."

In organizing the House, John C. Head of McCurtain County was made chair of the Investigating Committee that would pursue Johnston's impeachment with Republican John Sherman from Major County as vice-chair. Kight took over the powerful Appropriations Committee.

The Investigating Committee had twelve Democrats (seven irreconcilables) and eighteen Republicans. The counsel was E.P. Hill, Speaker during the Ewe Lamb session. The committee's efforts focused on developing a short list of impeachment charges that would be approved by the House and received in the Senate so that Johnston would be suspended from office. By late January, a list of eleven articles had been drafted. They included a number of articles related to misuse of public funds, the charge from the Ewe Lamb Rebellion regarding the use of the militia to impede the work of the Legislature, and the usual general incompetency charge. Five articles were approved by the House on January 18, 1927. The 78-22 vote on the first article revealed the weakness of the Johnston forces in the House. The closest vote before the House adjourned at 1:05 a.m. was 59-38 on one of the misappropriation articles. A considerable number of Democratic regulars gave their support for impeachment.

The seven-member board of managers then filed the five articles with the Senate. This time, Johnston was suspended from office after the charges were filed. The House managers amassed a voluminous public record in the impeachment proceedings. Some 141 witnesses were called, but not Mrs. Hammonds. She resigned soon after the charges were filed in the Senate, submitting a resignation letter that bitterly repudiated the House investigation which:

has proved beyond a doubt that no honest investigation was desired that could aid in a constructive program, but the entire record disclosed from the House investigation is but a lot of foolish statements and misrepresentations to create propaganda that would be sensational enough to throw a smoke screen over their purpose, all with the ultimate aim of accomplishing and carrying out their selfish aims and desires.

Historians Danny Goble and James Scales' examination of the impeachment record reveals a Johnston who seemed oblivious to the workings of his administration. They conclude that "at bottom, his greatest fault was one with his greatest virtue: absolute loyalty to the democratic Party and to the people that gathered around him." There was nothing really heinous proved by the House prosecutors, so Senators carefully cast their votes so that none of the specific charges received the required two-thirds majority. However, on March 20, 1929, Johnston was removed from office by a 39-5 vote on the general competency article.

The Great Depression and Governor William H. Murray

The members of the Thirteenth Oklahoma House of Representatives (1930-2) inherited a state economy that was rapidly collapsing as the Great Depression devastated all sectors of the Oklahoma economy. State and local services, including public schools, were jeopardized by a lack of money. Unemployment was rampant, banks foreclosed on families unable to pay their mortgages, and bread lines were long.

In Oklahoma City, a figure from the early history of the House of Representatives now occupied the highest position in the executive branch. William H. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray, Oklahoma's first House Speaker, was the surprise new Governor after a ten-year absence from the political scene. However, Murray, upon taking office, demonstrated that he had lost none of his political skills or his combative nature.

He made a point of gaining control of the House of Representatives and maintaining it for the next four years. As Speaker for the 1931 session, he picked Wilburton editor Carlton Weaver. Although Weaver was a new House member, his relationship with the Governor stretched back to the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention when Weaver was among its youngest members. In order to offset Weaver's inexperience at his new job, Murray convinced the Speaker to place the experienced W. A. Durant (Speaker in the regular session of the Third Legislature) as chief clerk. Murray knew Weaver would be tested by the Governor's extensive legislative program. Before Murray's inauguration, the House leadership passed its initial test by steamrolling the House for quick passage of House Bill 1 that created the Oklahoma Tax Commission. With the Governor-elect assisting, the bill flew through the committee of the whole in less than three hours with few amendments and only one vote against it.

Murray counted on cooperation from the Legislature in dealing with the many economic problems facing the Oklahoma economy during the first years of the Great Depression. He wanted passage of legislation early to provide emergency relief for the destitute and the elimination of the state property tax that burdened small farmers. Funding of the relief would be derived from a temporary income tax on salaries of public employees and officers. The Governor was taken back when House Majority Floor Leader J. T. Daniel and Tom Kight, who spoke for many constituents who felt that it was unfair to exempt higher paid private incomes, vigorously fought the salary tax bill. Rumors that Murray would replace Daniel as Majority Floor Leader turned out to be false, and Murray beat back the attempts to kill the bill by extending the tax to the private sector by a 57-32 vote.

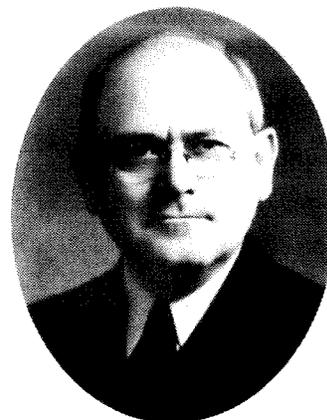
The fight over this bill, which also met strong opposition in the Senate, forced Murray to take a more active roll in his legislative program. At a joint session, "Cockleburr Bill" railed at the two chambers' reluctance to support his legislative program. He warned state teachers, who he blamed for the opposition to the salary tax, that he would start an initiative petition to reduce their salaries. He lashed out against his opponents in the Legislature: "With men and women under the very shadow of the capitol begging for clothing and food, you with big salaries in your fine hotels cannot understand the danger." To all of those who intended to oppose his legislation, he threw down the gauntlet: "The roll will be called and the fire bells will be rung before this is over. When you have whipped me, you can brag about it--but wait until you do!"

The session ran into a snag over Murray's bill to create a corporate income tax, viewed by contemporaries as the "most far reaching tax proposal as it relates to corporations that has been ever prepared in Oklahoma." The bill passed in accordance with Murray's wishes, but it was hacked up by the Senate which reduced the tax rates and riddled the bill with exemptions. The bill later died in conference. The resourceful Murray lost no time in taking his uncompleted legislative platform to the voters in a series of seven initiative petitions. Despite his vigorous efforts, voters, who feared the results of the dramatic reforms proposed by their eccentric governor, rejected all of the state questions, including ones that would have raised state revenues to cover a \$9 million excess appropriations due to the Legislature's failure to comply with his budget plan, in the Fire Bells Campaign of 1931.

In actuality, the Thirteenth Legislature was an important one. One writer said of it that it "stands out in many respects as the most unusual and significant Legislature the state has yet witnessed. . . . In general deportment, sobriety and fidelity to its public obligation it establishes a new mark in Oklahoma's legislative history." Some historians have seen the creation of the Tax Commission and county excise boards as the greatest achievement of the Murray administration. The establishment of a uniform assessment system in the state quickly increased assessments on corporate property by \$65 million and permitted the reduction of personal assessments by 20-25 percent. In addition, the Tax Commission provided the bureaucratic infrastructure for future tax reform efforts.

There were other accomplishments that session. For the first time in state history, funding (\$1 million) was provided for the feeding and clothing of the destitute. 1931 marked the first (but not the last) time that the House redistricting plan failed to follow the Oklahoma constitutional redistricting provisions that required the joining of counties which fell below the threshold for their own seats. The Panhandle was given seats for each of its four counties, even though they individually did not have enough population to qualify for the four seats. Murray allowed the bill to become law without signing it.

Although Murray's prestige had suffered from his defeat in the Fire Bells Campaign, he was determined to assert his leadership in the Fourteenth Legislature (1932-4). He took a different tack in the organization of the House by selecting an



Tom Anglin, Speaker for the 1933 Regular and Special Sessions and the Senator wounded in the Senate chamber in 1947 by Representative Jimmie Scott

experienced legislator for Speaker. He had convinced Tom C. Anglin of Holdenville, who had previously been President Pro Tempore of the Senate, to run for the House of Representatives in return for assurances that he would be picked Speaker. Though Murray's candidate for Senate President Pro Tempore was not successful, Anglin had little opposition in his Speaker's race.

During the first week of the session, Anglin and Murray tested the level of support in the House for the Governor in a resolution expressing confidence in him. It passed easily 82-30. In fact, Murray needed strong support during 1933 as the state fell deeper in economic depression. The failure of the Thirteenth Legislature to pass a balanced budget could no longer go untended. In his joint message, Murray recommended an \$11.8 million cut in the state budget for the next biennium. Although the institutional bloc and anti-Murray legislators were unhappy with his economy program, the House, under the strong leadership of Speaker Anglin, responded with an institutional appropriations bill \$6.8 million less than the current biennium and other budget cuts that Murray approved. Unlike 1931, he was successful in convincing the Legislature in 1933 to cut expenditures for state government by approximately 30% to \$22 million. *Harlow's* concluded near the end of the session of Anglin's performance as Speaker:

Oklahoma has had a number of strong Speakers, men with ability, influence and force, but it is probably true that at no time since the first Legislature [when Murray was Speaker] has any presiding officer maintained as definite and continuous control over all the activities of the House of Representatives as has the present Speaker.

That control would be vital as Murray and legislative leaders struggled to quell domestic unrest due to the state's economic collapse. In February 1933, political shockwaves were felt throughout the state when a large crowd blocked a foreclosure sale in Cherokee, and farmers there formed a "council of defense" to stop future sales.

The Legislature responded positively when the Governor needed legislation to carry through on his decision to call a bank moratorium in early March 1933, in order to prevent anticipated bank closings and to impose a moratorium on mortgage foreclosures on landowners who could not make their payments. Once again, the Legislature responded with great dispatch to meet a serious state fiscal crisis after Tulsa and Oklahoma City banks threatened not to honor state warrants. The Legislature enacted Murray's recommendations to divert a portion of gasoline tax revenues in order to issue \$12 million in state treasury notes so that state services would not be disrupted.

To some of his detractors, Governor Murray appeared to be asking the Legislature for almost dictatorial powers similar to those given European fascist leaders. Indeed, he was not hesitant to use his executive powers in order to cope with the extraordinary challenges that Oklahoma faced at the time; but the Legislature balked when he asked it to give him extraordinary powers to reorganize state government.

During the 1933 session, Murray's support was strongest in the House. His influence in the Senate did not allow him to persuade them to attach the emergency clause on a series of revenue-raising bills that had been enacted. Without emergencies, the bills would likely never take

effect due to the expected referendum petitions being circulated by the Citizens League that would send the bills to a popular vote. Consequently, Murray was forced to call a special legislative session for May 24, 1933, primarily for the purpose of adding the essential emergency clauses to the tax bill.



*Experts predict "horse trading" will dominate 1933 Special Session
Source: The Daily Oklahoman, May 24, 1933*

From the outset, political observers believed that the Governor would have to be willing to trade to get the emergencies and that the session would be a long one. During House consideration of the Governor's bills, the beer lobby allied with the school bloc to obstruct the Governor's legislative program. The Beer for Oklahoma League was known to have the support of at least forty House members and eight Senators in its effort to eliminate the provision that had been attached during the regular session to a legislative referendum. The school bloc, in joining the coalition, sought more funding for public schools.

It was quickly apparent that the Governor and administration forces in the House would not be able to steamroll his program through the House. On May 30, Leon C. "Red" Phillips from Okemah demonstrated the strength of opposition forces by successfully pushing the adoption of an amendment to require 97% of the temporary one-cent sales tax be directed for public education. The amendment was passed on a close 46-44 vote, despite threats from House Majority Floor Leader John Steele Batson of Marietta that its adoption might result in the sine die adjournment of the session (probably an idle threat since it was believed that the beer and school lobbies had the votes to prevent adjournment). The special session went badly for Murray. While he got the emergency on the income tax increase that he sought, he did not obtain one on the three-cent cigarette tax increase, which as expected, was repealed by voters later that year. He was unhappy with the diversion of the sales tax to education, but he let it become law without his signature. The beer lobby had its scheduled vote, and members of the Legislature were reported to enjoy the newly-legal beer as they finished work on the special session that finally adjourned July 15.

Before the session was over, hostilities erupted between the Legislature and Murray. Upset over the treatment of his program in the Legislature, Murray openly threatened to work to defeat his opponents in the 1934 elections. In the House, a number of members charged him with slander and character assassination. Speaker Anglin and administration forces had to fight to prevent the rejection of one of Murray's messages by indignant House members on a 56-28 tabling vote.

On another occasion, House members subjected the Governor to stiff questions about his textbook legislation enacted during the regular session. He responded angrily by accusing those raising questions as conspirators in a plot by *The Daily Oklahoman* and the state superintendent of public education to attack him. In defense of his program, he spoke in glowing terms of royalties that would go into funding a \$1 million Murray Foundation that would aid financially impoverished scholars. When one representative suggested that the program had the appearance of a form of

bribery, Murray believed his integrity was being questioned. Murray hotly responded that "I'll put my integrity against yours in your own county, anytime."

Despite the vigor of Murray's efforts to cope with the Great Depression, his program marked no significant departure from traditional Oklahoma politics. In fact, Governor Murray was one of the most outspoken of the nation's governors against the New Deal programs of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In this and other matters during the Murray administration, historians Danny Goble and James Scales conclude that:

From the moment of his startling triumph in the democratic primary of 1930, to the federal takeover of relief in 1934, the central issue in Oklahoma politics was "Murrayism." Less a program than a personality, it had inspired the best of his administration—the farsighted tax proposals, the ending of the impeachment mania, and the imaginative actions to relieve distress. But the worst in his administration—the defeat of the firebells initiatives, the unrestrained patronage system, the constant bickering with any who crossed him—also flowed from the excesses of that same personality.

Governor Marland Versus Speaker Red Phillips

The change in administrations from Murray to that of Governor Ernest Whitworth Marland presented the voters and the Fifteenth Oklahoma Legislature (1934-6) a fundamental change in direction. In contrast to Murray, Marland, a wealthy Ponca City oil entrepreneur, campaigned on the platform of introducing the New Deal in Oklahoma.

For Speaker, Marland tapped Leon C. (Red) Phillips from Okemah. Red Phillips, described as a powerfully-built and humorless conservative politician, had been an independent Democrat in the last Legislature, but Speaker Anglin had frequently called upon Phillips to preside. At the beginning of the session, the new Speaker pledged that he would give Marland's legislation program top priority. In fact, the two clashed from the opening days of the 1935 regular session, and for the next two years on the high costs of the Governor's program.

Although Marland was not inexperienced in government (he had served in the last Congress), he viewed the responsibilities of his office from the vantage point of his experiences as a corporate CEO. His biographer wrote of Marland's delivery of his speech to the joint session of the Legislature when he delivered his legislative program for 1935:

As he stood before the members of the Legislature, he was the old executive and these men were his loyal employees. He had no doubt that they could see the soundness and importance of his programs. . . . Big Red Phillips, Speaker of the House, was a division manager, who, though able, had not learned about the ethics of cooperation in the corporate family.

Therefore, it was much to Marland's surprise that legislators, particularly "division manager" Speaker Phillips, were unwilling to follow his lead on implementing the Governor's campaign promises. In the House, the Minority Leader said of the Governor's legislative program that "we went in the hole some \$4,000,000 trying to raise a \$21,000,000 budget these two years. I don't see how we can raise \$35,000,000 for one year." Speaker Phillips tempered his remarks by committing first to balancing the budget and then looking at the remainder of the budget for funding the Governor's program. From this remark, the rift between Speaker and Governor grew into a breach incapable of being closed. By the end of the 1935 session, the state of Oklahoma had witnessed a tremendous personal battle between these two powerful leaders—one in which Marland did not fare well. He needed more tax revenues for his program, but the power to tax was in the hands of the House of Representatives and its Speaker.

Prior to funding new programs, the Legislature was confronted with another fiscal crisis as metropolitan banks again threatened to not cash state warrants. This was a serious situation which Phillips felt took priority over Marland's program. In the meantime, Marland lost his patience over the House's delays on considering his legislation; he had hoped to have a series of emergency bills passed so that when he went to Washington, D. C. in late February 1935, he would be in a strong bargaining position in asking for federal financial aid.

Marland was overmatched in trying to beat Phillips on ground more familiar to the Speaker. Instead, the Governor attempted to go around the Speaker and the House in early March in a statewide radio address. He told voters that their mandate for his programs was being ignored, particularly in the House of Representatives. "The Republican interests, the lobbies and the Murray Democrats are the dominating influence in the state capitol today." The Speaker replied, also on radio, that the Governor was not being completely fair. To the charge that the House had no program of its own, Red Phillips said: "We have one. We have been working on it and will complete it as soon as possible."



*Leon C. "Red" Phillips,
Speaker 1935 Session. Source: The Daily
Oklahoman, May 5, 1935*

Symbolic of the philosophical differences between Marland and Phillips was their attitudes to the Governor's proposal for the creation of a strong state planning agency and federal control of relief programs. Phillips was cold to Marland's plans to give a prominent role in state government to "schemers" and for the creation of five new state agencies to coordinate Oklahoma's war against the Great Depression. The Speaker believed that the Legislature was the responsible institution for state planning. On the transfer of relief programs from the county to the federal level, the Speaker led the House in its defense of Oklahoma's right to operate those programs. When that legislation was taken up by the committee of the whole, Phillips thundered that "this is the time for us to act in a deliberate and sensible way." Sandy Singleton, the chair of the Appropriations and Budget Committee, supported the Speaker by arguing "let's keep Oklahoma money under Oklahoma rule."

By the time the Fifteenth Legislature completed its work around 4:30 a.m. on May 1, 1935, a great deal had been accomplished despite the battles between the Governor and the Speaker. If these accomplishments fell far short of what Marland had asked for in his New Deal program, it was more than some might have predicted given the lack of cooperation between the Governor and Speaker. The debt crisis was fixed by the creation of the Oklahoma State Debt Funding Board empowered to issue notes bearing 3.5% interest. A compromise on the state planning program was reached by the creation of a flood control and soil conservation agency and a weak state planning board. Plummeting local property taxes were offset by an unprecedented \$16.4 million state commitment for public school spending that represented a major step towards the state replacing local revenue as the major source of education funding.

However, *Harlow's Weekly* wrap-up on the 1935 session conceded that Phillips had won the contest with Marland. Marland's New Deal Program had not been allowed to penetrate deeply in Oklahoma's political thinking.

This program met a resistance led by Speaker Phillips, who in his thinking and in his attitude towards government appears to be representative of the older governmental theory, to-wit, that government is not a source of benefits but a necessary burden upon the people, limited in its functions to the time honored tasks of keeping the peace, maintaining courts, educating the children, etc.

Though rumors had circulated during the 1935 session that Marland would replace Phillips with another Speaker more friendly to the Governor's programs, Marland preferred to wait until after the session. Within the House, members more willing to work with Marland late in the session tried unsuccessfully to pull the Speaker closer to their position, but they stopped short of defining themselves as anti-Phillips.

As the 1936 elections approached, Phillips and Marland, who had already lost his race for the U. S. Senate seat that year, picked up their fight where they had left it at the end of the 1935 session. They took opposing sides of the debate during the campaign for State Question 214, an initiative petition on a special election scheduled for September 24, 1935. The petition proposed a one-cent sales tax increase for old age pensions in Oklahoma that would be administered by a constitutional Commission of Old Age Pensions and Security. Phillips opposed the question's passage because he believed there was sufficient existing state funds for old age pensions and that Marland's lack of leadership was the only reason that the program had not been enacted in the 1935 regular session or in a special session that the Governor now refused to call. Marland fired back by blaming Phillips for the poorly drafted State Question 209, a legislative referendum, which was also on the same ballot. This question also dealt with old age pensions, but it was much more restrictive in that it imposed onerous residency requirements and strict benefit caps that were not contained in federal laws that provided matching monies to the state. The legislative referendum went down to defeat, and the Marland-backed measure easily passed (it was later ruled unconstitutional for being illegally submitted).

The clash over the state questions undoubtedly reminded Marland that the future of his administration would be at risk with Phillips as Speaker in 1937. It was well known in political circles that Phillips wanted the second term, with or without Marland's approval. Not only did

Marland withhold his support, he tried to defeat the Speaker in his House election campaign and, failing that, brought the power of the Governor's office to make sure he would not win the Speaker's race for the Fifteenth Legislature (1936-8). This was the only time in Oklahoma history when a Governor worked to defeat a Speaker chosen by him.

Marland campaigned against Phillips in his district during the 1936 primary. Marland blamed Phillips for the poor condition of area roads. The Governor also aided Phillips' opponent, a much older man than the Speaker and a much less effective campaigner, by sending one of the Governor's strongest political backers to Okemah to work against Phillips.

At the same time, Marland persuaded former House Speaker James C. Nance, then a Senator from Purcell, to give up his Senate seat to run for the House against anti-Marland Louie E. Beck, also from Purcell. Marland's interest in the race was to put Nance in a position where he could offset Phillips' influence by either winning the Speaker's race for himself or throwing his support to a successful candidate. Both Nance and Phillips won their House races thereby moving the clash to the Democratic caucus.

The Phillips and Marland-Nance camps were active in the summer months of 1936 after Marland lost his U. S. Senate race. Shortly after Marland's defeat, a meeting took place involving about forty House Democrats in Oklahoma City. Following the meeting, it was reported that Phillips had nearly enough pledges to win the Speaker's race. Nance, who now declared that he was not a candidate for Speaker, did not believe Phillips had more than thirty pledges and invited Phillips to join him in backing an alternative candidate.

Marland swung into action by using his control over patronage in state jobs to block Phillips. This ploy was effective in a number of cases, but not all. Joe Chambers of Tulsa, who some considered as a possible alternative to Phillips and who was known to be pro-Marland, threw his support to Phillips in seeming defiance to the heavy handedness of the Governor. The loss of patronage did not bother Chambers. He explained, "I have but three people on the state payroll, and I told them [Marland supporters] they could start firing—that I was ready."

In the end, J. T. Daniel from Waurika, viewed as an independent Democrat during the 1935 session, emerged as the victor in the Speaker's race with the assistance of the Governor and Nance in November 1936. Phillips withdrew from the race as his support dropped. Marland and Nance's strategy had proved effective, but not without a struggle. *Harlow's* concluded at the conclusion of the Speaker's race that "anyone who takes a House organization away from Red Phillips can realize that he has done a real piece of work, no matter what the instrumentalities used in the process."

Spending Sixteenth

Marland's defeat of Phillips did not give him control of the Legislature. In fact, real power passed to committee chairmen in the Legislature paving the way for a spending spree that earned the 1937 session its reputation as the "Spending Sixteenth." Historians Gobles and Scales have noted that "the inept Marland, his pathetic messages to the legislature routinely ignored, was reduced to the status of the state's chief clerk." The biennial appropriation totaled nearly \$64

million, which represented a 300% increase over the budget when Marland assumed office. More ominously, the budget was \$40 million over projected budget revenues.

On the positive side, the Sixteenth Legislature halted Oklahoma's opposition to federal New Deal programs. Destitute Oklahomans were able to benefit for the first time from the Civilian Conservation Camps and the Work Progress Administration. Moreover, state spending for public education and welfare now seemed an accepted responsibility of the Legislature.

However, the fiscal lack of restraint of the Spending Sixteenth became a rallying focus for conservatives. Legislative leaders by-passed the newly-created state welfare agency and, instead, sent the funds to the county welfare boards. The resulting national news stories of waste and patronage in Oklahoma's relief programs gave Oklahoma a black eye. Based on this, the *Tulsa Tribune*, a conservative newspaper critical of the Marland administration, called the Spending Sixteenth "the worst in the history of the state."

Stingy Seventeenth

Conservatives did not have to look far for their champion for the 1938 gubernatorial campaign. Former Speaker Red Phillips was prepared to capitalize on the "conservative counter reformation" by crushing his opposition in the Democratic primary and then the 1938 general election to become the first state representative elected Governor (Murray had served in Congress between his term in the Oklahoma House of Representatives and his gubernatorial election). It must have been a humbling experience for Marland to sit through Phillips' inaugural speech as he promised to correct the financial problems left him by the previous Governor.

In sharp contrast to Marland, Phillips understood thoroughly the legislative process and how to deal with legislators. He picked Don Welch from Madill as Speaker for the 1939 regular session. Phillips had no difficulty in organizing both chambers. In addition to Welch, Phillips chose John M. Holliman of Bartlesville, a fiscal conservative, to chair the House Appropriations Committee. He left nothing to chance in organizing the Legislature. He also was reported to have employed his own investigator who reported solely to the Governor the campaign plans of his opponents and the marital problems of maverick legislators.

In addition to demanding deep budget cuts and restoring the fiscal health of state government, Phillips won approval for his legislation to gain control of the Oklahoma Tax Commission and the Highway Commission. The Public Welfare Commission members at first refused to resign, but the relentless pressure from the Governor and the Legislature wore down the Commission's opposition and the entire Commission resigned by the end of January 1939. The House contributed significantly to the pressure with a resolution requesting their resignation and then an investigation of the Commission chaired by Louis Gossett of Pushmataha County.

The Governor's economy program was well received in the House. Representative Holliman worked closely with the Phillips forces to cut out 20% from the departmental and institutional appropriations. The two chambers led the way in demonstrating their commitment to reducing the cost of government by cutting the legislative staffs by nearly 100 positions from 1937 levels.

The real test in the 1939 budget writing came on school funding. The school bloc was determined to raise its annual funding from \$12.8 million to \$15 million, but the Governor wanted to slash it to \$8 million. In the end, both sides had to make concessions, but the \$25 million appropriated to public schools for the biennium along with the continued drop in local property revenues caused spending for public education to fall below their levels at the start of the 1930's.

Despite all the efforts put into cutting the budget, the Stingy Seventeenth failed to pass a balanced budget. It would be the last budget enacted not subject to the constitutional balanced budget State Question that Phillips pushed through the Legislature in 1941. The question was approved by voters in March 1941.

Merle Lansden, Speaker by a Knock Out

When Governor Robert S. Kerr called the Nineteenth Legislature into a special session scheduled for April 10, 1944, it was widely presumed that the same organization of the House of Representatives for the 1943 regular session would apply for the special session. Many House members felt it would be inappropriate to elect a new Speaker to replace Harold Freeman of Pauls Valley, since he was unable to obtain a furlough from his war-time military service. Others were interested in the Speaker's position if there was to be a change.

As the Democratic caucus met the day before the session at the Huckins Hotel, matters progressed as expected. Speaker Pro Tempore R. M. Mountcastle of Muskogee's motion carried to keep the 1943 organization. He then surprised the Democrats by moving that Merle Lansden from Beaver be nominated for Speaker. Mountcastle explained that Lansden, a Marine private, as Speaker would be appropriate since the major reason for the session was to pass legislation making it easier for Oklahoma service men and women to participate in the 1944 elections.

Not all the members were happy with this surprise change of Speakers. Kirksey Nix of McAlester blustered that he had never before experienced such a "conniving maneuver." He further complained of Governor Kerr's complicity in the proceedings: "I've served three terms in the Legislature and I'm tired of getting dilly-dallied around. The people are tired of seeing the Legislature and executive branches so intermingled that they can't tell them apart." He then nominated John Steele Batson as Speaker.

Lansden, who was on a three-week furlough for the session, defended Kerr's decision. According to him, "This wasn't any fast play. The Governor isn't trying to deal around anybody. . . . He is my good friend, and he just leaned over backwards to help me out."

With that said, Lansden who had traveled a long distance for the caucus then fainted and was carried away on a stretcher with a gash in the back of his head. This so moved the members that a potential major revolt in the House died, and the wounded Lansden took up his duties as Speaker the next day.



Speaker Merle Lansden, left, in his Marine uniform, examines the discharge button of Minority Leader Carl Morgan from Guthrie, 1944 Special Session. Source: The Daily Oklahoman, April 11, 1944

Lansden was the first Speaker from the Panhandle (Note: C.R. Board from Boise City, elected Speaker in 1947, was the only other Panhandle Speaker.)

Johnson Davis Hill, A Politician Who Keeps His Word

Johnson Davis Hill was another member who was interested in the Speaker's position before the 1944 special session. Although he was passed over then, Governor Kerr let Hill's Tulsa constituents know that if they reelected him, Kerr would support Hill for Speaker. So when Hill won, it was a foregone conclusion that he would be the Democrats' choice for Speaker for the Twentieth Legislature scheduled to meet January 2, 1945.

Hill had not been a strong Kerr supporter in the last Legislature, but the Governor hoped that would work to his benefit by uniting some of the dissident factors in the House. Ray Parr, the longtime *The Daily Oklahoman* capitol reporter, called Hill the leader of the "Knothole Gang" of House backbenchers. One of the other members of the Knothole Gang, J. A. Arrington from Stillwater, lamented about his new seat near the front of the chamber:

It is all very sad. Now that we can get recognized, we'll have to think up something to say. For all these years we've been trying to hear these speeches. Now that we can hear, I think it was a big mistake.

The new session inherited a politically thorny issue that had disrupted the 1944 special session. The issue was whether or not State Superintendent of Public Instruction A. L. Crable should be impeached for his role in the textbook scandals associated with Governor Marland's administration. The scandal had already caused the conviction of former House Speaker and state Senator J. T. Daniel. The joint legislative committee charged with the investigation during the 1944 special session found no smoking gun for Crable's impeachment, but the committee concluded that he was "wittingly or unwittingly" the tool of Daniel. When a motion was made on the House floor to impeach Crable at the end of the special session, it narrowly failed by a 50-48 vote. If four absent Republican members had been present, Crable probably would have been impeached.

Speaker Hill was a strong advocate for the impeachment of Crable. He pledged during his recent reelection campaign that if Crable was not impeached within the first thirty days of the 1945 session, he would resign.

During the months since the adjournment of the special session, a joint committee continued the Crable investigation. In its report filed in November 1944, Crable again was cleared of wrongdoing. The report's tone was considered evidence that interest in the Senate for impeachment was lacking.

Speaker Hill was tested early in the impeachment investigation. John Steele Batson moved to place the responsibility for appointing the investigating committee with the whole House



Johnson Davis Hill, Speaker in 1945 who resigned from the Legislature when the House failed to vote for Crable impeachment.

due to Hill's known pledge for impeachment. Before the motion was defeated 97-11, Batson pleaded, "you wouldn't permit a man to sit in a jury who was pledged to send the defendant to the electric chair before the trial opened." Former Speaker Merle Lansden supported the proposal and wished it had been in place in the special session. To that, Harold A. Toaz of Atoka responded with a touch of sarcasm: "I'm sorry, Merle, you didn't think you had brains enough to be Speaker, or we would have provided such a rule for you."

The General Investigating Committee, chaired by John T. Levergood of Shawnee, worked into early February 1945 before filing its report containing articles for impeachment of Crable based on wilful neglect of duty, violation of his oath of office, and general incompetence. The Speaker scheduled consideration of the articles for February 13, 1945, the twenty-seventh legislative day. Hill refused to participate in the debate. He said his position was well-known on the matter, and he felt it was not appropriate for the Speaker to make floor speeches.

Lined up against the Speaker on the Crable impeachment were powerful opponents, principally John Steele Batson and Purman Wilson of Purcell, both of whom had an interest in the post of Speaker if the House voted against impeachment and Hill resigned. The debate lasted three hours that first day and the outcome was predicted to be close. Thirty-one Democrats were waiting to be recognized to speak against Crable's impeachment.

When the House finally voted, the impeachment articles were defeated. The closest vote was 55-59. House members then looked to their leader to see what he would do now. Some thought he could offer to resign as Speaker to the Democratic caucus or the House of Representatives in a face-saving move, but that the resignation would be refused. Instead, he resigned from the House the next day, February 16, stating that "my action is entirely individual and without any criticism of what anyone else [in the House] has or has not done," and kept his pledge to his constituents. However, he publicly blasted Governor Kerr and the "political machine" of Oklahoma A&M President Dr. H. G. Bennett for orchestrating the impeachment vote. Kerr repudiated the charge and the existence of a Bennett political machine. Hill, the only Speaker from Tulsa in the history of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, made an unsuccessful run for Governor in 1946.

To replace Hill, Governor Kerr decided to pick a candidate more supportive of his legislative program. As a result, H. I. Hinds of Tahlequah, on February 19, 1945, was elected Speaker for the remainder of the 1945 session.

The Oklahoma House of Representatives' First Two, Two-Term Speakers

The 1950's were important in the history of the Oklahoma House of Representatives in that for the first time, the House was led by its first two-term Speakers. Up to this point, it was a custom in the Legislature for presiding officers to serve only one term. In the early history of the House, it was not even a given that the House would maintain the same Speaker in a Legislature for the regular and the special session.

In 1953, James C. Nance from Purcell became the first two-term Speaker (he already shared with Tom Anglin the distinction of being the only men who were both elected to serve as Speaker and Senate President Pro Tempore) when he was chosen by Governor Johnston Murray to serve in that position. However, Nance's first term as Speaker was in 1929 when he then lived in Walters. Of course, it should be recalled that in 1929 he was not Governor Henry S. Johnston's choice for the job. Instead, he was one of the leaders of the irreconcilable Democrats who joined with the Republican caucus to elect a coalition Speaker in the regular session in order to impeach Johnston. Nance was also elected Speaker by acclamation in the 1929 special session.



*James C. Nance, Speaker
1929 and 1953*

Governor Johnston Murray picked Nance as Speaker for Murray's second Legislature. The intervening twenty-four years since he last led the House had not caused Nance to mellow much when it came to leading the House of Representatives. Governor Murray, the son of the first House Speaker and former Oklahoma Governor William H. Murray, proved to be a weak chief executive during the 1951 session. The 1953 session brought a repeat performance. His legislative plan was full of generalities, including the call for county consolidation without making it specific how it should be accomplished or which counties he wished to consolidate. Acting without leadership from the Governor, Speaker Nance took charge and worked out the details of the budget and other legislation with the Senate leadership. He appointed a fifty-member Committee on Governmental Reform chaired by former Speaker James M. Bullard from Duncan. At the end of January, the committee's recommendations became the basis for the House's thirteen-point plan that guided its work during the session. Oklahoma historians James Scales and Danney Goble dismiss Murray's role in the 1953 session as one of the worst in the state's history.

The Governor's vague economizing proposals had been junked altogether. For all the talk of consolidation and retrenchment, the only change that Murray saw through to completion was an innocuous measure to provide a central telephone switchboard for the capitol. . . . So weak was his authority that veteran legislators strained to recall Governor Marland's fate with the "Spending Sixteenth" as the closest parallel.

The relationship between Governor Murray and Speaker Nance was strained by the end of the 1953 session. The distance between the two was indicated by the Speaker's comment following a January 1954 speech by Johnston Murray to the Oklahoma Press Association. During his speech, the Governor criticized many state legislators as being "completely gutless" for their practice of earmarking state funds. Nance, present at the speech in his capacity as the publisher of the Purcell newspaper, called Murray a "do-nothing governor" and a "spineless misnomer." He concluded that it had been "wholly inappropriate for him to come down here and vent his spleen against other elective officials." As it turned out, Murray was only warming up to the topic.

On the opening day of the 1955 session and in his last address to the Legislature, he criticized a hostile group of lawmakers who he blamed for failing to follow his lead in modernizing Oklahoma government. He charged that Oklahomans were content to sit by as politicians heaped “one fool’s blunder upon another in our public affairs.” He concluded that Oklahoma voters accepted their fate.

We get bad government because we hold still to be skinned when we ought to get fighting mad. Our people have yet to acquire the fiery state patriotism which so marvelously serves our neighbor to the south. Many of our answers lie in the development of state pride.

When the thrust of his remarks were published later that session in a *Saturday Evening Post*, the anti-Murray reaction led to removing his name from what is today the Will Rogers Turnpike.



B. E. Bill Harkey, Speaker,
1955-7 Regular Sessions

The next two-term Speaker was more fortunate than Nance in his second term. B.E. Bill Harkey from Oklahoma City served under a more politically adept chief executive than Murray. Governor Raymond Gary, who was the Senate President Pro Tempore in the 1953 session, picked Harkey for both terms of the Gary administration. This made Speaker Harkey the first man to serve two consecutive terms as Speaker. It also marked only the second time in Oklahoma history, the other being the hours that Allan Street served as Speaker at the beginning of the 1929 regular session, that the state’s largest county was the home of the Speaker. Counting J.D. McCarty’s three terms, the House would be led by a Speaker from Oklahoma City for five of the next six terms (Clint Livingston from Marietta was elected Speaker between Harkey and McCarty in 1959).

Danney Goble and James Scales’ history of Oklahoma politics concludes that Gary’s control of his legislative agenda during the 1955 and 1957 sessions was the strongest since Governor Phillips in 1939 and 1941. His relationship with legislative leaders and rank-and-file legislators was also very good. Goble and Scales conclude of Gary’s legislative leadership:

Unlike Johnston Murray’s visionary demands, Gary’s recommendations did not risk futile confrontations with legislative blocs or local interests. Unlike his predecessor, Raymond Gary had the power—and the determination—to push them through.

It was under Gary’s leadership that he and the Legislature worked through the many tough steps in ending school segregation in Oklahoma that followed the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court landmark *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* decision. In Oklahoma, there was no massive resistance to the opinion that was associated with Governor Faubus in Arkansas and several other southern governors. The Legislature passed House Joint Resolution 504, a legislative referendum popularly called the Better Schools Amendment, proposing to end school desegregation in Oklahoma’s common education system. Voters approved the question in April 1956 by a 3-1 margin.

The breaking of the one-term precedence soon would lead to a series of three-term Speakers, starting with J.D. McCarty in 1961 through Glen D. Johnson who completed his third term in 1996. The only exceptions during the period were the partial term of Steve Lewis (part of the 1989 session, through the 1990 regular session) and Jim Barker who completed Draper's third term and was the only Speaker to serve four terms (including two partial terms).

The Knothole Gang Takes Control

For years, J. D. McCarty, the gifted Oklahoma City legislator, had sought to become Speaker, but each time the office would come open, a Governor would hesitate to choose McCarty despite all his legislative skills. Marty Hauan wrote later that James C. Nance was in large part responsible for thwarting McCarty's efforts in the past to take control. Nevertheless, McCarty did not lose hope. Instead, he capitalized on his independence by becoming the feared leader, the "Kingfisher," of the "Knothole Gang" backbenchers in the House of Representatives.

McCarty also had an ambition for the House of Representatives which when realized would fundamentally change its political dynamics. That is, he believed that for the House of Representatives to play its proper constitutional role in Oklahoma state government, the House had to put an end to the traditional deference to Governors on organizing the House and chose its own Speakers. We have already seen before that there were exceptions to this tradition, notably in 1921 when Republicans controlled the House, the 1923 and 1927 impeachment special sessions, and the 1929 regular session when a coalition Speakership was formed to impeach a Governor.

The opportunity availed itself once more during the J. Howard Edmondson administration of 1959-63. The Big Red "E" was elected Governor by the largest margin of any gubernatorial election in Oklahoma history. Youthful and energetic, Edmondson and his crowd of "crewcut boys" constituted the New Guard sent to Oklahoma City to rout the Old Guard in the Legislature. In particular, Edmondson believed his was a mandate to pass his reform platform that included the creation of the merit system and central purchasing in state government, repeal of prohibition, and the constitutional reapportionment of the Legislature.

McCarty campaigned hard for the Speakership in the 1959 session. Shortly after Edmondson won the Democratic nomination (and presumably the governorship), McCarty marshaled his support for the Speaker's race whose winner in those days was decided after the run-off. To his dismay, Edmondson selected instead Clint Livingston of Marietta. When the decision was announced to McCarty at his Biltmore Hotel headquarters, his disappointment was clear. "More than 40 members of the House of Representatives have just left my headquarters. We have no comment for publication at this time."

Edmondson's 1959 legislative program was ambitious. Although he was remarkably successful in pushing central purchasing and merit system reforms and a legislative referendum for the repeal of prohibition through the Legislature, his support among lawmakers was never as strong as it had been for Raymond Gary. Over the course of the 1959 session, "Old Guard" legislators

increasingly resented Edmondson's "bone dry liquor" enforcement program and their rough treatment by Edmondson and the "crewcut kids." Veteran House members like James C. Nance rightly noted that Edmondson would need the votes of Old Guard members.

Nor was Edmondson satisfied with what had been accomplished at the end of the session. In what may have been the most politically costly strategy in the state's political history, Edmondson decided to prepare the remaining items of his legislative program not passed by the Legislature for a series of initiative petitions for the voters to approve in the spring of 1960. One political reporter from *The Daily Oklahoman* said of the Governor's plan:

Edmondson apparently realizes an initiative program would be a winner take all. If he wins, he will be in full charge in the next Legislature. If he loses, and the Legislature is organized against him, it could be a rough second session for the youthful Governor.

From the start of the campaign, Edmondson was hamstrung by the Democratic Party machinery which, outside metropolitan areas, opposed him and his initiatives. Two questions were particularly unpopular in rural Oklahoma: 1) state control of county road money and 2) legislative reapportionment. By the time voters decisively rejected the controversial questions in September 1960, they had already played a major role in his loss of control of the Oklahoma Democratic Party and the Legislature. Both chambers organized themselves, independent of Edmondson, immediately after the 1960 primary election when voters elected a large number of anti-Edmondson Democrats.



Speaker J. D. McCarty, 1961-5 Sessions, who ended the custom of Governors organizing the House

J. D. McCarty and the House Democratic caucus acted first. On July 7, 1960, after twenty years in the House of Representatives, McCarty was at last the heir apparent to the Speaker's office. He took with him several other members of the Knothole Gang, notably Delbert Inman of Coal County as Speaker Pro Tempore and Leland Wolf from Noble. Wolf humorously noted that in 1959, he was so removed from the action that "nobody could even find me."

McCarty made a major contribution to the history of the House, not only by breaking the Governor's power to organize it, but also by becoming the first three-term Speaker (he was



"The Big Red E" and his House Team for 1959 Session. From left to right: Speaker Clint Livingston from Marietta; Governor J. Howard Edmondson; Majority Floor Leader Frank Ogden from Guymon; and Speaker Pro Tempore Noble Stewart from Sallisaw