

MINUTES OF MEETING
STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
February 2^d, 1961

The State Affairs Committee met in Room 529 at 1:30 P.M. for a public hearing on House Bills 107 and 108. Mr. John Bower, author of the bills was introduced to make preliminary remarks on behalf of the measures. Dr. Arlin Ebright, a methodist minister, President of the United Dry Forces, was introduced and spoke for the united dries and as a pastor. He stated that it was his opinion that all questions relative to alcholic beverages should be decided by all the people. He stated that in many cases the majority of the people were denied the right to vote because of their rural residence, when their nearby city held elections.

Mrs. Winifred Peterson, State President Christian Womens' Temperance Union, spoke in favor of the two bills, particularly H.B. 107, dealing with County Option. She feels that the rural people should have a voice in what goes on in the adjoining town where they do business and where their children attend school. Mr. Frank R. Anderson of White City, a farmer and minister, spoke about his concern over the liquor industry and its regulation. Mr. Roger Will of Dennison, Kansas, spoke in favor of the passage of these measures. He stated that he spoke for many of his neighbors in saying that he felt under the constitution of the United States, he and his neighbors should have a voice in what happens in the near-by towns. He gave statistics concerning the city residents and county residents and pointed out that the county residents have no voice in the control of taverns and the sale of liquor even though they do their business in near-by towns and send their children to school and go to worship there.

The Rev. Elmer Brooks of Colby, pastor of the First Methodist Church, spoke at length along the same lines, reiterating that rural people should have a voice in controlling malt beverages and liquor stores in the cities; particularly in the cities where they worship, do business and deal in education.

Mr. Bower inquired of an over-flow crowd if their feelings had been voiced in the meeting, and a show of hands so indicated. Mr. Bower stated that there may be disagreement on how to control the bad effects of alcohol, but that these bills were a beginning.

Mr. Harry Lytle, Chairman of the Pardon and Parole Board of the State, gave a statement to the secretary following the meeting, citing an example of a man in prison for murder, and giving specific details concerning a drinking episode that resulted in murder; and now being confined in prison his family is supported by Welfare, and the approximate cost thereof, as well as the cost of his interment in prison--guards, food, clothing, etc. Mr. Lytle stated that with more control over liquor, these cases could be eliminated and thereby save money for the taxpayers.

The meeting was at this point adjourned to Room 522, and the Committee proceeded to other business. Mr. Taylor discussed H.B. 177, the Barber bill, and discussed the proposed amendment to the printed bill, which amendment is agreeable with the Barbers and with the Governor. Miss Jacquart moved and Mr. Underwood seconded, that the amendments be adopted. Motion carried. Mr. Doyen moved, seconded by Mr. Behee that the be be recommended for passage as amended. Motion carried.

Mr. Unruh expounded concerning "small loan businesses", and stated that he would like to introduce two bills into the committee for introduction as committee bills, to regulate these businesses. He discussed specific incidents of how the law permits abuse of the citizens. Mr. Richardson's H.B. 200 was discussed, and it was stated that his bill dealt only with a reduction in the rate of interest, while Mr. Unruh desired to establish more rigid controls. It was agreed that many people have little "sense" about the business of borrowing money and terrific advantage is taken of them. Mr. Johnson stated there are many different kinds of loan companies, and Mr. Unruh stated that he was concerned only with the unscrupulous operator; not ones dealing in appliance and auto loans, etc., but the foreign company who does questionable advertising, etc., particularly outlawing the company requiring the assignment of paychecks.

Miss Jacquart moved, seconded by Mr. Bisbee that Mr. Unruh be granted the privilege of presenting these bills for Committee introduction. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned.