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## Senator Weaver Favors Primary For All Parties

Buncombe County Senator Believes People of State Want Such Measure and Is Preparing It—His Statement of Interest and Significance.

Hon. Zebulon Weaver, senator from Buncombe, is going to introduce a primary bill when the next legislature meets, in the almost certain event of his re-election. The bill is going to be of the thoroughgoing kind and will mark a departure from the measure contemplated in the state platform. It will be more in harmony with the kind of law proposed in the minority report of the platform committee, and no little significance is attached to the announcement of Senator Weaver, coming as it does from one of the big western counties, the home of Governor Craig and other party members of state-wide prominence. The statement of Senator Weaver indicates that he is familiar with the sentiment of the people of this western section and that it is his purpose to respect that sentiment.

In a statement given to The Gazette News today, Senator Weaver said: "Senator Weaver's Statement. 'If elected as senator from Buncombe county at the general election to be held in November it is my purpose to offer in the general assembly a bill providing for state-wide primaries to be held by all parties for the purpose of selecting nominees for congressional, state, judicial, legislative and county officers, or to advocate any adequate bill offered by any other member of the general assembly for that purpose.

"It is well recognized that this government in which its officers are selected through parties, and the officers of the government, especially its legislative officers, can only hope to accomplish and carry out what the people desire when such officers have behind them party support. At present, of course, all of our officers are elected at general elections, in which the respective parties have selected their nominees and offered such nominees to be voted for by party adherents. If a democrat, republican, progressive or socialist desires to affiliate with his party in the general elections he necessarily has to vote for the nominees so offered to him and placed upon the party ticket. It therefore becomes to my mind as important to the people and to the members of any party that they have the right under legalized primary elections to vote for and participate in the selection of the party nominees to be voted for at a general election as to participate in such general election itself.

"The selection of proper nominees is the first step and important step in selecting the officers of government, and the people are as much if not more interested in this, the initial step as in the final election, because as stated, the members of any party are necessarily forced, in the general election, if they affiliate with their party, to vote for the nominee, however selected.

"While the details have not been worked out, I would advocate a bill which would secure to all parties having a well defined organization in the state or county, the right under a primary election, to be legalized and safeguarded, to select their respective nominees. Such primary elections should be held under a status providing machinery and looking to the prevention of fraud and illegal methods in primary elections, as fully as in elections now held under law for the final naming of all officers.

"The bill contemplated, therefore, would require that in the state and in all counties of the state, a primary election shall be held for all officers as herein referred to, on the same day and under the supervision and direction of judges of such primary elections, with such clerical assistance as may be necessary. In order to do this it will be necessary to constitute a board of primary elections in each county and in the state, which shall have the supervision, management and direction, of these elections. These judges shall be selected in some manner that will be fair to all parties, and insure a just and fair election, count and return of the votes of each candidate of any party.

"It should be provided further that any person desiring to become a bona fide adherent of any political party should be allowed to participate in such primary, and vote for such nominees of his party as he may desire.

"It should provide further that any person desiring to become a candidate for the nomination of any office upon the ticket of any party, should within a reasonable time prior to the calling of the primary election, file a written statement with such board of primary elections, stating the office for which he desires to become a candidate, and the party on whose ticket he desires to run, and the tickets for each party should be printed and distributed under the supervision of and by the board of primary elections, by the state board, or state officers, and by the county board for county offices.

"It should further be provided that all persons desiring to participate in such election in cities and the larger towns, should be compelled to register, and registration officers should be appointed by the board of primary elections for each county upon the written request of the chairman of the respective political parties of such county, and in the precincts, which should correspond with the precincts for general elections, such registration officers should act as clerks for the primary election.

"The bill should further provide for fixing a date for such election, not less than six weeks prior to the general election, either by agreement between the chairman of the respective parties, or by the board of primary elections.

"The bill should further provide for hours during which the polls at said primary election should be opened and closed, and I think they should close early enough that the judges and clerks of election, might have time to canvass the vote and make their returns without inconvenience, and such returns should be made to the board of primary elections, or some other body constituted for that purpose, and canvassed by them on a day certain, and the result thereof declared.

"The bill should further provide for the expenses of such election to be paid by the county or state, as in general elections now held under law; in other words, such primary elections should become thoroughly legalized and held under the law, as fully as general elections are now held.

"It should further provide for the character of tickets to be voted by each party at such election, so as to prevent confusion or fraud and also for proper challenging of any person offering to vote, either upon the ground that he is not a qualified voter, or will not be a qualified voter at the general election following, or for the reason that he is not a bona fide adherent of the party for whose nominee he offers to vote.

"At the same time, neither in the same bill, or a separate bill, the fairness of such election should be guaranteed as far as it is possible to do, and provision should be made against fraud of any character, including the purchase and sale of votes, or the use of any other means or practices that would corrupt a popular election, with adequate punishment for any violators of the law.

"The above is a statement of a few of the ideas which now occur to me for the purpose of effecting what I believe to be the will of the people in regard to primary elections, and for a fuller control by the people. The details of a bill will, of course, have to be worked out in order that all parties and all voters should be fairly treated. It is my purpose to make a careful study of the laws of the various states in which primary elections have been successfully adopted, and to prepare such bill as would meet the wishes of the people, if possible. I thoroughly believe that the people are desirous of some such legislation, and that true and genuine popular government demands it.

"If the people are to decide upon their representatives and officers, they should have a right to participate in the selection of such officers, from the first to the last step.

"I apprehend that one of the principal questions to be determined, if any primary law is passed, is as to whether or not it shall apply to all counties and to all officers. I am thoroughly of the opinion that it should apply to all offices, including county offices, and should be state-wide, and mandatory upon all parties who desire to present nominees at the general election, to select them under such legalized primary elections. I would be opposed to any exemption of counties on account of their political complexion, or otherwise, but if such exemption is to be made at all, it should not be arbitrarily made by the legislature, but by exempting from the operation of the bill certain counties, and should not be made otherwise than by a vote of the people of the county themselves, and if exemptions are to be allowed, which I think would be unwise, machinery should be provided for elections to be held that the people of any county themselves may determine whether or not they shall be exempted from the bill.

"The people are demanding more and more the full control by them of the matters which vitally concern them, and the democratic party as the now dominant party of the state, should provide for them what they

need and demand. Democracy in North Carolina has heretofore responded to the people, and has given them much needed progressive legislation. Beginning with the suffrage amendment of 1900, the party has inaugurated many reforms, and its record in this respect is one that should appeal to all voters, and there is no reason now why the party should not provide for state-wide primaries, in order that popular government may be still further advanced and safeguarded."

### CHAMPIONSHIP WON BY CLABBY ON FOUL

Sydney, N. S. W., July 6.—Jimmy Clabby, Saturday won title of middleweight champion on a foul in the eighth round.

### American Wins Race.

London, July 4.—Homer Baker, of the New York Athletic club Saturday carried off the British half-mile running championship in the splendid time of one minute 54 2-5 seconds. A. G. Hill, Polytechnic Harriers, was second and R. E. Atkinson, Cambridge university, third.

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