

## O. MAX GARDNER SPEAKS AT STATE CONVENTION

Stirring Address Heard by Delegates to State Democratic Convention Thursday.

Raleigh, July 7.—The State Democratic Convention met here Thursday with representatives from practically every county in the state. One of the features of the day was an address by Gov. O. Max Gardner, which follows:

"A State Convention of North Carolina Democrats, organized, harmonized, and ready for the 'kick off' is to me the most inspiring sight my eyes have ever looked upon. For others some other sight and some other theatre—but for me this sight and this theatre possess the power that moves and the glamour that endures.

"The record of the Democratic Party in North Carolina is a record that makes glad the heart of patriotism. This record marches hand in hand with the record of the State of North Carolina herself. Schools, health, roads, public welfare, are all the handiwork of the Democratic Party, and are the monument to the capacity of its leadership.

"For thirty years North Carolina has been writing new chapters—brilliant chapters—in the book of progress. Every page in this book is proud that it bears the clear imprint of the statesmanship of the Democratic Party. That marvelous story of transformation from a slow-going agricultural state to a commonwealth throbbing with industry, with business, with commerce and with a re-awakened agriculture could not have been written except for this living, breathing, controlling, humanizing agent for good that we are happy to call the Democratic Party—your party, my party, our party.

### Party Stands on Record.

"Our party stands on its record and asks to be judged on that record. Its candidates run on its record of achievement. It fights on that record. It defeats its opponents on that record. It enjoys the confidence of the people on that record. It will elect, organize and direct the work of the next General Assembly on that record. And on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, 1930, it will triumphantly elect, by 100,000 majority, the Honorable Josiah William Bailey to the United States Senate on that record. What is that record? It has been triumphantly key-noted to us today by Judge Varner and is fresh in the memory of a grateful people.

"Of course, this is not the time nor the place nor the occasion to give an accounting of the stewardship of my administration. I shall have an opportunity to render this accounting to many of you when the next General Assembly convenes. I shall not let this moment pass, however, without taking advantage of it to put before you one important aspect of this stewardship. This administration has attempted to attune itself to the spirit and the temper of the times and to adapt whatever advance it has achieved to the demand of the times.

### Taxes Reduced.

"In striving to bring this administration into harmony with the changed status of economic conditions and with the thought of this period, the question naturally arises: What have we done? What have we done that we can go to the people with and ask for their support and approval in carrying on the unfinished program of the State? What have we done? We have succeeded in one of the rarest and most difficult of all governmental achievements. We have reduced taxes. The 1929 General Assembly reduced taxes—taxes on property—taxes on land. This General Assembly gathered \$6,750,000 of the State's revenue, collected largely from a comparatively small group of citizens and from corporations, and carried this vast sum of new money back to the counties and the districts of the state to do the work and pay the debts that had formerly been done with dollars collected by the districts and counties from the general property tax. For the first time in the modern history of this State, the taxes levied by the local governments on property in 1929 were lower both in rate and in amount than they were the year before. This \$6,750,000 sent back to the counties of the State represents an average reduction in rate of 24 cents on the \$100 of valuation throughout the entire state. In actual fact, the reduction ranges from zero in some places to more than fifty cents in others. The true democracy of this principle was recognized in that the reduction was biggest on the places and on the people where the burden was heaviest, and where they were least able to pay.

"In order to effectuate this \$6,750,000 reduction in the financial burden borne by the property tax, it has been necessary, of course, to increase the revenue raised from sources other than property. We take pride in the fact that during the past fiscal year ended last Monday, the Commissioner of Revenue collected for the general fund, under the 1929 Revenue Act, a total tax revenue of \$15,344,000. In this period of industrial and business depression, this year's collections actually reached and slightly surpassed the original estimates made by the Budget Bureau at the close of the last General Assembly as to the revenue collectible under the tax schedules. To have reached the original budget estimate, after the prolonged period of business depression which developed early in the fall of 1929, indicates a faithful performance of duty by the Revenue Department and a fine spirit of cooperation by the taxpayers.

### State Debt Decreases.

"Another fact in which the Democratic Party justly takes pride is that we have reduced the state debt. Not only have we decreased taxes—and expect to continue to decrease them; we have also paid our debts. North Carolina is one of the states in this nation that is actually paying its debts at a time when it is hard for any individual, any corporation, any organization, any government to pay. Think of this: From January 1, 1929

to June 30, 1930, a period of eighteen months, the state paid off indebtedness in the sum of \$6,298,000. It put into the state's sinking fund to pay debts \$2,013,000 additional. In all it devoted to the repayment and the amortization of debt the tremendous sum of \$8,311,000. We are doing more than paying our debts: The 1929 General Assembly placed adequate safeguards around the contracting of further debts by local governments. I regard this as one of the most conspicuous and outstanding achievements of the administration.

"We have soundly managed the state's financial program. The business of the State of North Carolina is as efficiently and scientifically managed, in my opinion, as is that of the best of the strictly business corporations of similar size and complexity. On the first day of July the State Treasurer, with the approval of the Governor and the council of state, sold \$2,000,000 of bond anticipation notes, authorized by the 1927 General Assembly, and running for nine months, at the unprecedentedly low interest rate of 2 3-4 per cent per annum. Gentlemen, the State of North Carolina could not issue 2 3-4 per cent notes if her financial house were not kept in order.

### Readjustment.

"Not only have we reduced taxes, not only have we paid debts, not only have we soundly managed the state's finances. We have done more than this. We have adjusted our expenditures to our income. This has been more difficult than tax reduction or the payment of debts. During the past fiscal year, we decreased the total appropriations to departments and institutions one million dollars; and we have called upon the depart-

ments and institutions during the coming fiscal year to decrease their budgets two million dollars in order to make sure that our expenditures during this biennium do not exceed our income. We cut all operating appropriations except the \$6,500,000 made to the Equalizing Fund, which was not cut because it was a tax reduction measure and because cutting it would have necessitated the levy of additional taxes on property. This cut of three million dollars from appropriations have necessitated the reorganization and readjustment of our institutions and departments and has challenged the highest efficiency cooperation and patriotism of institutional and administrative leadership. It is a matter of genuine gratification to me to tell you that the administrative heads and those in the ranks of the departments and institutions have shown a remarkable spirit of cooperation and that they are accommodating themselves to the situation worthy of a great people and in complete justification of their leadership.

"Of course, we are having to do without some services that were helpful; but I am convinced that we are adjusting our expenditures to our income without impairing materially the services performed and with the determination to lose nothing permanently by this policy.

"I do not recite this story merely to give emphasis to the saving of money—important as this is, but to show that the leadership of the Democratic Party means to keep faith with the taxpayer when it is entrusted with the responsibility of the management of the financial affairs of this great state.

"The supreme ambition of this administration has been to keep its

eyes lifted and its vision unclouded, that we may see the state as a whole. When history comes to appraise the contribution of this administration, I believe I could wish for no finer thing than for him who writes the verdict to say that the Gardner administration saw North Carolina steadily and saw it whole.

"Let us pledge the Democratic Party to seek the common good of all of our people in the harmonious development of all the varied interests of the state. I believe in the Democratic Party—in the greatness of its past, in the vigor of its justice, in the perpetuity of its policies, and in the glory of its future. I would preserve the party from the bitterness of factions and the wounds of fratricidal strife. At this particular moment my heart swells with great joy to see the Democratic Party in North Carolina once again in the happiness of family reunion and to

see the ranks, filled with more than 200,000 sons and daughters, marching to the polls under the flag of a united party, welcoming the dawn of a greater day and the election of the entire Democratic ticket—the ticket that offers the positive guarantee of the building of a finer state, the creation of a nobler commonwealth."

P. O. S. A. MEETS.

Ellenboro, July 7.—The district meeting of the Patriotic Sons of America was held here Thursday. A number of the state and district officials attended. A feature of the meeting was an address by H. G. Mitchell, of Statesville, state president, and Fred O. Sink, of Lexington. Included in the district are the lodges at Henrietta, Shelby, Ellenboro, Lawndale, Fallston and Cherryville.

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