

THE NORTH IDAHO ANNEXATION ISSUE

(Continued from Vol. XXI., page 217.)

"Mr. Speaker, I desire to say but little on this question. This pan-handle of Idaho, about which there has been so much talk, has been a bone of contention for the last twenty years. . . . A large majority of the people living in that part of the territory have wanted annexation to Washington Territory. There is no doubt about that fact in my mind. The people of the southern portion of Idaho, however, have objected to it until the last two years. Up to that time, their objection was a serious one. Three years ago last fall, the people of the north were so embittered against the people of the south because they could not be annexed, that both political parties in these northern counties refused to participate in the territorial conventions. They called an independent convention for the purpose of nominating a man to run on the annexation question, with a view of sending him to Washington city to work for the annexation of these counties to Washington Territory, whether he was elected or not. But the Republican candidate⁴³ was a little sharper than the Democratic candidate, and he rushed up north and pledged himself to go for annexation,⁴⁴ and they took him for their candidate, with the understanding down south, I am told on good authority, that he did not intend to work very hard for it.

"However, he secured almost the unanimous vote⁴⁵ of these northern counties and was elected. But although he was elected he did not secure their annexation. At the recent election, or rather at the conventions which preceded the election, the Republicans placed a section in their platform,⁴⁶ pledging their party to do all in their power to secure the annexation, and their delegate was pledged to do whatever was in his power, if elected, to annex these northern counties to Washington Territory. The Democratic party took the matter under advisement, talked it over, and after some

43 Theodore F. Singiser. For eighteen years the delegates representing Idaho were Democrats. Then Singiser, a Republican, represented Idaho in the 48th Congress. He was succeeded by Hailey, a Democrat.

44 The Republican nominee for delegate from Idaho, in a speech to the annexation convention, held at Lewiston, said: "If I am elected to congress, I shall and will use my utmost endeavors to secure for you the full fruition of your hopes. I will cordially co-operate with Mr. Brentz, of Washington, to secure your annexation when Washington is admitted. I will do my utmost in congress, before its committees, and before the departments of government, to secure the success of your measure of annexation. I pledge myself, fully, freely, and unequivocally to aid in securing for you, annexation to Washington, where, from your geographical situation, you properly belong, when it is admitted into the Union."—*The Teller*, Oct. 19, 1882.

45 Nez Perce county gave Singiser 1060 and Ainslie 40.

46 *Resolved*, That the wishes of the people of North Idaho in regard to annexation to Washington Territory should be faithfully and justly represented. It is a question of local importance with the people of that section, and demands recognition and support in proportion to the unanimity of their expression of that subject.

consideration of the subject, concluded that they would also put the same plank in their platform,⁴⁷ or substantially the same thing, favoring this annexation. I gave them due notice that if the plank was inserted in the platform and they nominated me, that if elected I would try to give this portion of the territory away to Washington Territory.

"I now propose to keep good the pledges made by my party and myself by trying to have them annexed to Washington Territory. They have expressed a desire to go to Washington and I do not propose to keep them from going; they have been very troublesome. I hope the bill will pass to annex them to Washington Territory, because we can get along very well without them. It has been clearly understood for years that the people of these counties themselves wanted to be annexed to Washington Territory. The legislature in 1885 passed a memorial requesting that these counties be annexed to Washington, but with the proviso that they should pay their portion of the debt of the territory just as this bill provides. . . ."

The crisis in the cause of northern Idaho came in the forty-ninth Congress, 1885-1887. The determination of the people in the Panhandle had so shaken the political stability of the parties in Idaho that first the Republican and then the Democratic platforms adopted in the state conventions had declared in favor of the division of the territory. But the most striking testimony to the exigencies of the situation came from the Idaho legislature itself. In the session of 1884-1885 a memorial to Congress favoring in unqualified terms the separation of the northern counties was adopted by a vote of 9 to 3 by the council and 20 to 4 by the representatives. The memorial⁴⁸ declared that the political union of the north and south areas of Idaho was impracticable. "Socially, commercially, and geographically they never can be united." The boundary suggested by the legislature was the Salmon river range of mountains.

The law-making body of the territory had spoken; both political parties had formally given their assent; it seemed likely that the way was now smoothed for rectification of what so many regarded as the mistake that had been made in 1863.

Two bills were introduced into the forty-ninth Congress to sat-

⁴⁷ *Resolved*, That we recognize the full right, justness, and importance, and final result of the claim of our citizens of northern Idaho in their annexation views; and here, in open convention, backed by an honest Democracy, we pledge to our northern neighbors a willingness and cooperation on our part to accede to their wishes on this proposition in a mutuality of feeling that shall bind us together fraternally now and sow the seeds of eternal friendship when the separation may come; and we ask our northern friends to accept this pledge in the honesty of its intention and with the full assurance that it is based upon the promise of a permanent resident political organization and not the imported vibrations of homeless, faithless, wandering political mendicants.

⁴⁸ *Congressional Record*, 49th Congress, 1st session, p. 1706.

isfy the aspirations of Washington Territory and northern Idaho. One of these (S.B. 67) was introduced by Senator Dolph of Oregon, and provided for the admission of Washington to the Union with northern Idaho annexed. The other was introduced by Delegate Voorhees of Washington (H.B. 2889) and had for its sole object the annexation of the Panhandle strip to Washington Territory. Both bills proposed the same line of division:

“Commencing at a point in the middle of the main channel of Snake river due west of the headwaters of Rabbit creek;⁴⁹ thence due east to the headwaters of Rabbit creek; thence down the middle of said Rabbit creek to its junction with Salmon river; thence up the middle of said Salmon river to the junction of Horse creek; thence up the middle of said Horse creek to the junction of the East Fork of said creek; thence up the middle of East Fork of Horse creek to the crest of the Bitterroot range of Mountains.”

Senate bill 67 passed the Senate by a vote of 30 yeas to 13 nays on April 10, 1886; three days later it was introduced into the House of Representatives and was referred to the Committee on Territories. It was not the policy of the Democrats to admit a state that quite obviously would be Republican, and the bill remained with the committee until January 20, 1887, when it was reported favorably and ordered printed. No further action ensued and Washington did not attain statehood until 1889.

The Voorhees bill almost achieved the goal for which northern Idaho had struggled so long. It was introduced January 7, 1886, and referred to the Committee on Territories, which reported favorably February 3rd,⁵⁰ and on the 23rd of the same month, the

⁴⁹ It appears on present-day maps as Rapid River. It is Rabbit Creek on Symon's 1885 map of the Military Department of the Columbia. It rises on the east slopes of the Seven Devils range and flows into the Little Salmon about six miles south of the confluence of the Little Salmon and the Salmon rivers.

⁵⁰ The Committee on the Territories, to Whom was Referred the Bill, (H.R. 2889) to Annex a Portion of Idaho to Washington Territory, Make the Following Report:

It appears that that portion of Idaho, the annexation of which to Washington Territory is contemplated, cast a vote of 2,788 on November 4, 1884, indicating, at a ratio of population to vote, 4.7, a population of 13,103. These people are almost wholly isolated from the southern portion of the territory by the Salmon River range of mountains, which are exceedingly rugged and precipitous in their character. The construction of a wagon road across these mountains from north to south has, thus far, been regarded as wholly impracticable, so that at this time the sole direct means of communication between the two sections consist of a primitive Indian trail. During six months of the year this trail affords facilities alone to those who are expert in the use of snow-shoes. Under the most favorable conditions, pack-animals alone furnish any means of direct communication.

Because of the natural barriers indicated, a journey from any portion of northern Idaho to Boise City, the capital, is a very tedious and expensive affair. The distance across the mountains ranges from 200 to 400 miles, while the distance necessary to be traveled ranges from 400 to 600 miles, the route being a very circuitous one, through the Territory of Washington and the State of Oregon. For these reasons there are practically no commercial relations between these sections of Idaho, while on the other hand, the northern section is so situated with reference to Washington Territory as to make their interests—social, political and commercial—identical.

In 1873 the Legislative Assembly of Washington Territory memorialized Congress for the annexation of northern Idaho, as contemplated in the proposed legislation. In the winter of 1884-85, the legislative assembly of Idaho passed a similar memorial, and

measure came before the House. An interesting debate⁵¹ occurred in which Voorhees championed his measure and John Hailey, delegate from Idaho, made the remarks already quoted, while Hill of Ohio was critical of the sincerity of the annexationists. Delegate Joseph Toole of Montana argued in favor of assigning to Montana that portion of the Panhandle north of the forty-seventh parallel on the ground that it was mining country and its needs would be better taken care of by Montana than by Washington, which was predominantly agricultural. The discovery of gold in the Coeur d'Alenes in 1883 had been followed by the development of large silver-lead deposits and a numerous mining population, many of whom had come from the mining areas of Montana, had settled in eastern Shoshone county.

The bill passed without a roll call; was transmitted to the Senate, and on February 25, 1886, was referred to the Senate Committee on Territories. Here it lay for a year and was then reported favorably. On March 1, 1887, it was considered, some minor amendments made, and passed likewise without roll call. The House concurred in the Senate amendments and the bill having been approved by both houses, was sent to the President. The forty-ninth Congress came to an end March 3, and as President Cleveland did not act on the measure within the constitutional ten day period, it consequently failed to become a law.

We know little or nothing regarding the reasons for President Cleveland's position in the matter. A persistent rumor to the effect that Governor Edward A. Stevenson⁵² had strongly advised against the division, and that his opinion had caused the President to let the bill die, made its appearance in the newspapers at the time and has come down to the present as the most likely explanation. Governor Stevenson was President Cleveland's appointee, and the President may have looked upon him as less likely to be influenced by current political opinion than the elected officials.

during the last campaign the platforms of both political parties, in both Territories, declared in favor of said annexation, indicating an almost unanimous sentiment on the part of the people of both Territories favorable to the enactment of the proposed law.

In response to the manifest necessities of the case, and in deference to the clearly expressed wishes of the people of both Washington and Idaho Territories, your committee recommended the passage of the accompanying bill.

⁵¹ *Congressional Record*, 49th Congress, 1st session, pages 1706-1710.

⁵² Edward A. Stevenson was born in New York, but spent most of his life in the West. He resided a number of years in California and moved from that state to Idaho in 1864. He lived in the Boise country until his death in 1896. He was a prominent figure in Idaho and was active in business, fraternal, and political affairs. He was speaker of the House in the eighth territorial legislature and a member of the council in the ninth legislature. His appointment as governor of Idaho was in line with President Cleveland's wish to appoint a resident as territorial governor rather than a person from outside the territory. According to James H. Hawley, his appointment was secured by John Hailey, territorial delegate, and a fellow Democrat. In 1894 he was the Democratic candidate for governor but was defeated by W. J. McConnell, his Republican opponent.

In a recent article in the *Idaho Statesman*⁵³ ex-Senator Dubois says that he was in Washington in March, 1887, as the delegate-elect of Idaho and Colonel Shoup and other men from Idaho, urged him to try to persuade the president not to sign the bill. This Dubois declined to do, as he had promised not to interfere in the matter before the end of the forty-ninth Congress. Dubois goes on to state that "Governor Stevenson and a number of the leading members of his party, sent the president a long telegram. This stated that the people of Idaho had evidently changed their minds in regard to annexation, which they asserted was shown by the fact that I had been elected over Hailey, having made my campaign against annexation, while Hailey had urged it. They urged the president to veto the bill so that I, when I entered Congress, would represent the true sentiment of the people on the subject."

According to the *Teller*⁵⁴ the people of northern Idaho, in the election of 1886, were advised to vote for Hailey⁵⁵ as one who could be relied on to represent the popular will, but false reports had been spread that Hailey had made statements in southern Idaho unfriendly to annexation. This cost him votes in the northern counties, while in southern Idaho pro-Mormonism was charged against him. Dubois received 7842 votes and Hailey 7416 in the territory. In Nez Perce county Hailey had only 304 majority over Dubois, while at the same time an advisory vote on annexation to Washington carried 1675 to 28.

In the report of Governor Stevenson to the Secretary of the Interior for 1888, the sentiment of Idaho Territory on the annexation question is discussed. As evidence of a reversal of sentiment Stevenson cites the resolution of the fourteenth territorial legislature (January 12, 1887) against the separation of the northern counties which passed the Council by 9 to 3 and the House by 20 to 4. In this resolution the fear is expressed that the dismemberment of Idaho would postpone its prospects of statehood indefinitely. The Governor also cites a similar resolution of the Democratic territorial convention at Boise in June, 1888, which was carried by 44 to 6, the six negative votes all coming from Nez Perce and Latah county delegates.

During this time popular feeling in southern Idaho broke the terms of settlement outlined in the 1884-85 memorial, and the declarations of the party platforms. Popular petitions were largely signed

⁵³ *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), October 27, 1929.

⁵⁴ *The Teller* (Lewiston), December 2, 1886.

⁵⁵ Hailey was personally opposed to the separation of northern Idaho, but he tried to carry out what seemed to be the wish of the people at the time of his election.

protesting against the division of the territory, while from the northern counties many petitions were sent to Congress urging separation. The Congressional Record shows that a barrage of petitions praying for separation or protesting against it fell upon Congress. This zealous activity in putting up prayers to Washington continued in the fiftieth Congress, for on February 13, 1888, Mr. Voorhees presented a petition signed by 1845 citizens of northern Idaho asking for annexation to Washington, while on another day Mr. Dubois, now delegate from Idaho, presented one having 4500 signatures against it.

There were certain indications of hesitation on the part of some of the residents of northern Idaho at the very time when it seemed as though they were about to break the bonds against which they had chafed so long. Some opposition was shown in Idaho county because the Salmon river line of division would cut the county in two. The most strident note of dissent, however, came from miners in the Coeur d'Alenes, who preferred to be united to Montana. In the debate of February 23, 1886, John Hailey said scornfully:

"Now, at this late date, some of these northern counties, I understand, are kicking about it when they find that they can really be annexed to Washington Territory, and they do not want it near so bad as they thought they did. Some of them say that they prefer to go to Montana Territory,⁵⁶ and for that reason they send in here and oppose the passage of the bill which proposed to give them the very thing they have been asking for so many years, and I therefore insist on the passage of the bill."

As we look back at it now, we can see that the flood tide of the annexation movement had passed, but its supporters still fought on.⁵⁷ The annexationists were disappointed and angry, but their anger was directed at Stevenson and the Boise politicians more than at the president. Leland's defiant reaction was expressed in the *Teller*.⁵⁸

56 An advisory vote in Shoshone county in 1886 gave the following result: For annexation to Montana, 254; for annexation to Washington, 112; for remaining in Idaho, 53. On March 8, 1886, a petition of 600 citizens of the Panhandle praying to be annexed to Montana was presented to Congress. The report of S. T. Hauser, Governor of Montana, to the Secretary of the Interior, dated September 27, 1886, in H. Ex. Doc. 1, Part 5, vol. 2, 49th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 829-835 contains valuable information on this matter.

57 The humorous side of the annexation question frequently found expression in verse. Miss North Idaho speaks:

"Oh! Washington, my sweetheart dear,
You'll have to wait another year,
For though to you I fain would go
My papa, 'Grover,' he says 'No,'
And as you know, my dear, we are neither old
And a year will not make our love grow cold.
We'll brave misfortune's stormy weather,
And next year will see us joined together."

—Colfax Commoner.

58 *The Teller*, March 17, 1887.

"There is a new segregation party forming in this territory which will interest you, Kelly,⁵⁹ with a congressional candidate in the field who will stand upon a platform upon which all honest men, without regard to party, will stand: Dismemberment of Idaho. Coeur d'Alene, if it desires, to Montana; Kootenai, the rest of Shoshone, Nez Perce and Idaho, to Washington; southeastern Idaho to Nevada; and Milton Kelly and Boise City to Hades."

There were meetings at Lewiston and Grangeville; a committee of twelve drafted an elaborate statement of the situation and of the wishes of the people in the Northern counties which fills three and one-half columns in the *Teller*.⁶⁰ Both the Republican and Democratic conventions in Nez Perce county endorsed annexation. On October 15, 1888, a large mass meeting was held at Cove, Idaho, and much enthusiasm was shown. Judge Norman Buck, at the invitation of the meeting, became an independent candidate on an annexationist platform, and although his campaign only started a short time before the election, he polled a large vote in the northern counties, and in Latah and Nez Perce he received 1295 votes against 682 for Dubois and Hawley, combined, who were the regular Republican and Democratic candidates. In Shoshone county, however, Buck obtained only 35 votes out of a total vote of 1805. Altogether in the five northern counties Dubois had 1847, Hawley 1772 and Buck, 1454. It is evident that population changes, especially in Shoshone county, and new issues were pushing the annexation question into the background.

The agitation in behalf of statehood for Idaho, which was seriously undertaken in 1888, tended to weaken the sentiment for separation in northern Idaho, and caused some of the former friends of the movement to withdraw their support. A united Idaho might obtain admission to the Union and the political interests of the northwest would be strengthened by two senators and a representative. But southern Idaho alone was not likely to become a state for many years, and moreover, there were schemes afoot to attach a part of southern Idaho to Nevada. Senator Stewart, of that state, had announced a plan of this kind. Senator Mitchell, of Oregon, who had hitherto favored the division of Idaho, now declared that, all things considered, it was best to accept the *status quo* and to try to get Idaho admitted as a state. In this way, according to Mitchell's view, the strength of the far west in Congress would be materially increased. In response to these considerations a division of opinion

⁵⁹ Milton Kelly was publisher and proprietor of the *Idaho Statesman* (Boise).
⁶⁰ *The Teller*, January 19, 1888.

among the people of the northern counties was beginning to appear.

At this time, the majority in the legislature tried to placate northern sentiment by establishing the State University at Moscow, and by authorizing the issue of \$50,000 in bonds to build a wagon road from Mt. Idaho, in Idaho county, to Little Salmon Meadows, in Washington county. This would be built through a part of the barrier area, and would make communication somewhat more practicable.

On January 22, 1889, an event occurred at Lewiston that indicated the growing rift in opinion that was now beginning to appear among the residents in the very stronghold of separation. A meeting was held to discuss ways and means of securing statehood. Four days before, the House of Representatives had passed the Omnibus Bill for the admission of the two Dakotas, Montana, and Washington. Washington was to be admitted with her territorial boundaries and without the northern Idaho section. Evidently Washington intended to seize the opportunity to become a state without waiting for the annexation of northern Idaho. Under the conditions, the advocates of annexation had a hard problem to face. Should they wait indefinitely hoping for annexation, or should they unite their efforts with southern Idaho and try to gain statehood without further delay? A hot debate ensued and the annexationists withdrew to frame resolutions defining their position, while the original meeting⁶¹ adopted resolutions demanding that Idaho should be admitted to the Union with its existing boundaries. The resolutions urged the united efforts of "our sister town and counties" in asking the immediate action of Congress.

This meeting was indicative of a remarkable change in opinion. Here, where the doctrine of separation had been held most tenaciously, new political interests were becoming manifest. Evidently a new era was approaching—one that held a promise of happier days politically for the elongated territory. The time had come for northern Idaho to lay the annexation movement away, to accept the inevitable, and to adjust itself to the existing situation.

When both Idaho and Washington had been admitted to the Union, the likelihood of any modification in their boundaries became exceedingly remote. Nevertheless the incompatibility of the regions revived at times the question of separation. Although the people had accepted the existing boundaries, they nevertheless imagined on those occasions that they would have enjoyed greater political hap-

⁶¹ According to the *Teller* 90 withdrew from the meeting and 43 remained; and the news despatches that were sent out grossly misrepresented the matter.

piness if, in the sectional marriages to form states, they had been joined to different partners.

Two of these regretful moods may be briefly mentioned—both based on the idea of the formation of an interior territory or state along the lines of the abortive Columbia Territory of 1866. With the first, which occurred in 1907, northern Idaho had little to do, although its promoters declared that they had the support of the people living there. The 1907 plan aimed to remodel the northwestern states by creating a new state out of eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and northeastern Oregon. The proposed state was popularly referred to as the state of Lincoln,⁶² and in 1917 the same name was suggested. Southern Idaho was to receive in compensation a part of what remained from eastern Oregon. The net losers in population and area would be western Washington and Oregon.

This movement was started at the annual banquet of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, where many people became interested and considerable enthusiasm was evoked when the idea was proposed. During January and February it was the subject of numerous editorials, interviews, and explanatory articles.⁶³ The business situation furnished a significant background. At the time, the leaders of affairs in Spokane were very optimistic. New railroads were reaching into the Inland Empire, and all the signs betokened a period of growth and prosperity. Moreover, the freight rate situation was looking better. For years the interior had struggled against rates greater than those to coast terminals. Back in 1889 Spokane had begun its fight for better rates, but thus far the gains had been small. In 1906 the Hepburn law had rejuvenated the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission and Spokane had promptly presented her case. An important meeting of the I.C.C. was held in Spokane early in 1907 and the city was keenly alive to the opportunity of a possible victory. According to the *Spokesman-Review* the coast cities were showing an unfriendly spirit in standing by the railroads in their unwillingness to concede the reductions demanded by the interior. Along with these economic complaints

62 Another attempt to use the name of Lincoln may be noted in the favorable report by the House Committee on Territories in the forty-fifth Congress, February 28, 1878. (Report 110 in serial 1789.) It proposed to make the region between the 23rd and 28th meridians (Washington) and the forty-third and forty-ninth parallels into this territory. It would have included the western parts of the Dakotas, eastern Montana, and the northeastern part of Wyoming. The greater part of the area would have been taken from the western half of the Dakotas, and would have left a single state of Dakota with its longer axis running north and south.

63 In the *Spokesman-Review* for January 13, 1907, to March 11, there are 31 articles and editorials on the subject.

were charges that western Washington monopolized the political opportunities of the state.

Although economics and political rivalries were keen, the separatist project did not draw much popular interest and is to be viewed partly as a reprisal action and partly as a booster organization movement. The newspapers of western Washington and Oregon did not take the matter seriously and directed their jibes at Spokane, alleging that the Inland city was ambitious to become the political and business center of the new state. The Portland *Oregonian*, of January 28, 1907, accuses Spokane of ill-temper and churlishness, and suggests that under the circumstances western Washington might follow Satan's example of dealing with Mephistopheles—giving him a hunk of brimstone and telling him to go off and start a little hell of his own. Newspapers outside of the areas immediately concerned do not seem to have regarded the proposal sympathetically, and after several weeks, the articles in the *Spokesman-Review* became infrequent and the matter passed out of the minds of the people.

The antagonism between Northern and Southern Idaho flared up sharply during the legislative session of 1917. The issue seems to have been revived by a proposal to move the State University from Moscow to South Idaho as a part of a program for consolidating the institutions of higher education. This was considered in a joint meeting of the education committees of both houses, January 27. Senators and representatives from the northern part of the state began to urge the secession of North Idaho, and in this they had for a time considerable support from the southeastern counties. Southwestern Idaho was opposed to the movement. On January 31 the plan to move the University was indefinitely postponed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 41 to 4, and this decisive vote was said to have been secured to allay the secession agitation.

However, the movement seemed to gather, rather than to lose, momentum. It was announced on February 4 that a sufficient number of votes had been secured in both houses to pass a resolution memorializing Congress to create a new state out of Northern Idaho. On the same day a large mass meeting was reported to have met at Coeur d'Alene and to have heartily endorsed the plan of separation.

The names of the members of the Legislature who were reported pledged to separation were published February 6th and these lists constituted a majority of both houses. It was announced that

a constitutional convention would meet at Moscow, June 17, and that the southern boundary of the new state would be the southern boundary of Idaho County. The preamble to the proposed resolution stated that the division was necessary because of geographical conditions, the mountain and canyon barriers across the central portion of the state, the fact that the North was humid and the South arid, that their industries and interests were different and that there was no convenient railroad communication between the two areas.

The southern boundary, as proposed, commenced where the township line between townships 9 and 10 intersected the main channel of the Snake River, and from that point ran east on this township line until it reached the divide between the Salmon and Snake rivers, and then followed the divide easterly to the Montana boundary. It will be noticed that this division proposed a line considerably more to the south than did the divisional plan of the territorial period.

The State Affairs Committees of both houses decided to send the resolution to the Committees of the Whole in each house without recommendation, as they believed that so momentous a question should be considered by all the members of the legislature. On February 19 the lower house in committee of the whole approved (41-18) the plan of state separation after amending the resolution by withdrawing Washington and Adams counties from the proposed new state. In this action it was noteworthy that votes from southeastern Idaho, together with those from the northern counties, passed the measure. The House of Representatives, on February 26, took up the Committee report and passed the resolution by a vote of 36 to 25.

The Senate did not act on the joint resolution until the last day of the session, and then, by an adverse vote of 32 to 10, the resolution was tabled. All the ten votes in its favor came from North Idaho.

The correspondent of the *Portland Oregonian*, writing from Boise, under date of February 10, gives an unprejudiced view of the question. He believed that the plan of division was likely to fail, as the proposed state would be too small, without portions of Washington and Montana, to get the approval of Congress. At the same time, he admitted the surprising strength of the idea. This came from the fact that the two parts were diverse in interests and that communication was difficult. As communities, they were quite different. To remedy the situation, north and south highways and a

north and south railroad would help. Otherwise, the barriers would remain to the detriment of both sections. The agitation to change the location of the state institutions had not improved the situation.

The division issue has become a memory, but it still furnishes a subject for a newspaper story⁶⁴ when disputes arise regarding offices or state schools. Everyone must recognize that readjustments of state lines is now practically a political impossibility and probably all but a few have become satisfied with existing conditions. The completion of a finely improved highway from the North to Boise, and the building of a railroad link down the Snake canyon from Homestead, Oregon, to Lewiston, would add greatly to the political and economic unity of the state. A large part of the North and South Highway has already been finished, but the Homestead-Lewiston road waits in the future. The business interests of Lewiston have tried to secure from the Interstate Commerce Commission an order requiring the construction of this connecting line, but on March 23, 1929, Examiner John L. Rogers filed with the Commission an adverse report. According to the report, the amount of probable traffic would not justify the heavy expense of construction. On October 29, 1929, arguments were made before the Interstate Commerce Commission on behalf of the public service commissions of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, to compel the railroads concerned to build the 126 miles of connecting line. To this order the railroads opposed strenuous objections. It was interesting to note that one of the arguments offered by the state of Idaho was that it was entitled to direct North and South railroad service without being compelled to traverse Oregon and Washington in getting from one end of the state to the other.⁶⁵ On January 17, 1930, the I.C.C. rendered an opinion refusing to order the Union and Northern Pacific railroads to jointly build the line. The commission held that the \$22,000,000 of probable cost would not be justified by the public interest although it would be a great convenience to travelers and the movement of freight and would shorten the distance between Boise and Lewiston by 200 miles. Although the present attitude of the transportation companies is opposed to the investment of the necessary capital, it seems reasonable to believe that the advantages of a water grade route, as compared with the climb over the moun-

⁶⁴ As an example, see the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* of March 16, 1929, page 2, column 1: "Lincoln State Again is Talked."

⁶⁵ Nearly 50 years ago the *Idaho Statesman* was predicting that the Oregon Short Line would build directly to Lewiston and furnish a connecting link between North and South Idaho thus taking away all the argument in favor of a division of the territory. *Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman*, February 20, 1883.

tains of Eastern Oregon will in time cause the railroads, of their volition, to utilize this natural pass from South Idaho to tidewater.

Moreover, if, as so many believe, we are about to enter an era of aerial transportation, whatever of inconvenience there has been in the shape or topography of Idaho will disappear when the passenger from Sandpoint or Coeur a'Alene to Boise can be carried to his destination across mountain ranges and river canyons in two or three hours. Perhaps this will be the ultimate solution.

C. S. KINGSTON⁶⁶

⁶⁶ The writer wishes to recognize the material assistance furnished by the following: Mr. J. Orin Oliphant, Cambridge, Mass.; Mr. T. C. Elliott, Walla Walla; Mr. W. S. Lewis, Spokane; Hon. Sam B. Hill, U.S. Representative, Washington, D.C.; Mr. T. H. Shontz, Asst. Sec. of State, Boise, Idaho; Mr. Charles F. Curry, Clerk of Committee on Territories, U.S. House of Representatives; Miss Ruth Rockwood, Reference Librarian, Portland, Oregon; ex-Senator Fred T. Dubois, Washington, D.C.