

Governor Morley Griswold Gives His Side of the Campaign Issues

Reprint of Speech Given Oct. 10 In Reno

The Age is reprinting herewith the notable address made by Governor Morley Griswold in Reno, October 10, 1934. The address is approximately the same, differing only in slight details of wording, as that made by Governor Griswold in Las Vegas Monday evening, October 15.

The address is a notable one, in that it is a ringing defiance of those who have sought, through insidious propaganda and innuendo, to discredit him, and in its straightforward and forceful statements, it is typical of the man.

You have expected from me, and rightly, a statement as to the various charges that have been made against me, and the various insinuations that have been cast upon me. You are going to receive that report freely, fully, and truthfully. There is nothing in any of my dealings that I am ashamed of, and the People of Las Vegas, Clark County and of the State of Nevada are invited to check any and all statements that I may make tonight. If you will contact me personally, I will be glad to furnish you proof as to what I shall say.

The people of this State are entitled to know from me what will be my stand and what I intend to do in the event I am elected to the office of Governor. My talk will cover these subjects.

It is unfortunate that I should have had heaped upon me bitter attacks, openly, by insinuations and by rumor. It is unfortunate, particularly in times such as these, when I have been placed in the very difficult position I now occupy by reason of Governor Balzar's death. For a period of 18 months or more, I have been the football between Mr. Sanford and his Reno Evening Gazette, and Mr. George Wingfield. From articles that have been contained in his paper, it is evident Mr. Sanford has a marked enmity for George Wingfield. What Mr. Wingfield thinks of Mr. Sanford, I do not know, because I have not heard, nor have I seen any public statement, nor do you or I care what either thinks of the other. What either thinks of me, I cannot say, except that Mr. Sanford, through the columns of his newspaper, has over a period of months, belittled, misrepresented me, and held me up to scorn by innuendo and insinuation. In fairness to other State officers, both Republicans and Democrats, he should not couple them with me. He should name me personally and not injure the reputations of other innocent office-holders against whom he may not have the antagonism that he has for me. Every candidate on the Republican ticket is entitled to square treatment. We do not hate those whom we can control, because they never give us any cause to hate them. Mr. Sanford assumes that it is his privilege to call me any name that he may desire, and that is perfectly ethical, but, if I raise my voice in answer, then I must be charged with slinging mud. If someone were to

throw a rock through my window, would that give me license to throw a rock through a window in return? Listen carefully, Nevada people, and learn what the true facts are, and then say whether those facts as given to the people of this state may truthfully be regarded as throwing mud.

The one big question that has been raised and is being urged in this campaign against me, and it seems to be the only thing they have been able to find to say against me, is that Morley Griswold is a "Wingfield mouthpiece," a "political gangster," and the like. I am presenting to you tonight the real facts of the closing of the Wingfield banks, the bank reorganization cases, and the developments since the appointment of the receiver. Listen well, friends, and find out who is at fault and who is responsible for the condition we find ourselves in now in the Reno National Bank, the United Nevada Bank, and the other banks of the Wingfield chain. It is necessary that I give something of my history in order that you may see and appreciate my position in the circumstances leading up to the present catastrophe.

My father and John Henderson, president and main stockholder of the Henderson Bank at Elko, were partners in the land and livestock business from the time I was a baby until 1929. The firm name was Griswold-Henderson Livestock Company, and when I had graduated from college and became an attorney, I went into the law offices of Charles B. Henderson, former Senator of the United States, and eventually that law firm became Henderson and Griswold. After some years of experience as an attorney I was selected as attorney for the Henderson Bank at Elko, and I so continued as attorney until the closing of the banks. In 1931, I decided to remove to Reno to continue the practice of my profession, and did so, and in due course my family joined me.

The first intimation I had of the difficulties of the Wingfield chain of banks was on Saturday, October 29th, 1932, about 12:30 noon. On Saturday morning I had made a deposit of personal funds in the Reno National Bank, following other deposits made earlier in the week—all of which were in that bank when it closed. The original deposit slips are available for the inspection of any citizen of the State of Nevada who desires to see them. Hence, I had no information as to the condition of the banks when I made those deposits, because the doors of that bank have never since opened. My checks over the period of a year before the closing of the banks are available to the people of the State of Nevada to see whether or not I withdrew money from the banks for my own uses and purposes. As Lieutenant-Governor, I was called upon by Mr. George Thatcher, Attorney for Mr. Wingfield, Mr. Allard Calkins, of the R. F. C., and two other members of the R. F. C., and was informed that the Reno National Bank could not open on Tuesday morning, and was also told that the other banks in the Wingfield chain were in a precarious condition and could not continue business. I testified to these facts before the investigation committee of the Legislature. It is enough for me to say

that the situation was presented to me and I was informed that it was my problem to do with as I saw fit. Governor Balzar was out in the state. I called him on the 'phone and got him in as early as possible. After discussing with him, he left for Washington, D. C. to see if he could arrange with the Government for a federal loan of \$2,000,000 to keep the banks open to save the people of Nevada from loss. Sufficient to say that I never saw Mr. Wingfield and I never received any requests or suggestions from any of his associates. It was my problem and I knew I must handle it. I called the bank examiner and the Attorney General of the State of Nevada and discussed the situation with them. Got their suggestions and drew the proclamation declaring the bank holiday, hoping Governor Balzar would be successful in his trip to Washington, D. C.

Prior to the time of signing that proclamation, I wanted the advice of independent bankers so I called Mr. Richard Kirman, Sr., one of my opponents in this campaign, and I handed him the proclamation. He read it in the presence of Gray Mashburn, attorney general of the State of Nevada. He read it the second time, and then Mr. Kirman looked at me and smiled and said, "Morley, I guess you're in a tough spot, but you have done the only thing that could be done," and this statement was made by Mr. Kirman to me in the presence of Mr. Gray Mashburn, Attorney General of the State of Nevada, and I am sure Mr. Mashburn will confirm my statement. It is significant that the same procedure I followed was promptly followed by twelve of the other states of the Union and by President Roosevelt in his proclamation immediately upon assuming office, and this course has received the approval of the Legislature of the State of Nevada.

The next step in the bank business was the appointment of a committee from the Senate of the State of Nevada to investigate the closing of the banks. I refer you to the Senate Journal, where you will find that the Senate investigating committee was appointed by the Senate and not by me. I did not make those appointments. The next step in the bank business was the now famous reorganization plan and suits, and it is this that seems to have given those opposing me the basis for charging that I was a Wingfield mouthpiece, and that what I attempted was vicious or bad. I want the people of the State of Nevada to know the truth with reference to the bank reorganization, and it is going to be given. Every statement I am making, or will make, will be a statement of fact, and then I ask you to draw your own conclusions.

First, I never saw the form of waiver that was prepared until after it was printed and signatures were obtained. I had nothing to do with the drawing of the waiver, nor did I ask any man or woman in the State of Nevada to sign a waiver. I was busy with the State Legislature. I was not a member of the Committee of 100, and took no part in their deliberations. That waiver named three men who, as far as I know, had been freely chosen by the depositors themselves to represent them. They were Mr. Kind, Mr. Dyer and Mr. Eccles. Mr. Dyer soldiered under me in the Army during the World War, and we occupied the same tent, and we ate in the same mess hall, and he was my friend. I had done his law work for him for many years, and if there is one man

in the State of Nevada that I know is my friend, one who would do anything it was possible for him to do for me, it is no one other than Ed Dyer. Clarence Kind and I have been friends for many years, and I had done some law work for him. Mr. Eccles, I did not know until after Mr. Dyer and Mr. Kind had talked to me about representing them as members of the Executive Committee for the depositors. Mr. Eccles selected his good friend and attorney Mr. George Gunzendorfer and I together then represented the Depositors Executive Committee. It has been charged that we were representing Wingfield or the Wingfield group. This charge is not true. I sued Mr. Wingfield, directors of his banks, and stockholders. It has been said that he favored reorganization. I would be very much surprised if he did not. It seems to me that anyone who investigated the true facts, and who now sees the result of not having reorganization, should have favored that reorganization. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The same plan that we eventually tried to put into effect for the Wingfield banks has been followed by Ely, Yerington, as well as for the Henderson Bank, and for the Bank of Wells in a modified form; also, for the Battle Mountain Bank and the Fallon Bank. In none of these cases has a single member or stockholder or director of the old ownership had anything to say concerning the opening and conduct of the new bank. If they were depositors, they had their same representation as other depositors,—no more, no less—and they say that Morley Griswold is an "Under-cover Wingfield man," although he, in open Court, and in all of the trial of the bank cases, made every statement for a public record, and every statement he made was carried in the newspapers and received much adverse publicity from Mr. Wingfield's enemies — and don't think I am crying because of that fact. I did nothing in the bank reorganization for which I am ashamed, nor have I done anything for which I am sorry, although the bank reorganization cases cost me more than six months of my time and over \$3,000.00 of my money. One thing I did learn, one of benefit to me, I learned just how effective propaganda from the press can be in accomplishing certain dubious ends. Sometime in the future, I may have a newspaper that will tell the truth without fear or favor. Those suits were filed for the depositors. Let us analyze for a moment and see whether or not the depositors were right. It is a significant fact that the Henderson Bank signed up over 64% of the depositors, practically every depositor in that bank that was in the United States—the Winnemucca Bank signed up over 76%—the Carson Bank signed up well over 50%—the Virginia City Bank and all of the other banks, save and except the Reno banks where the depositors could be influenced by those who bore Mr. Wingfield a grudge or enmity. One of the concerns to file an answer against reorganization was the First National Bank in Reno, Mr. Kirman's bank, and that bank, with Mr. Kirman as its President, had an attorney in Court representing it during the entire six months of those trials, although the amount involved was only the sum of \$3,324.35, on deposit in the Henderson Bank. Mark you, ladies and gentlemen, I, Morley Griswold, was in Court all of those days, and know whereof I speak. When the trial of that case had progressed to the point when it