

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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LEGISLATIVE RECORD

OF THE

*One Hundred and Fourth
Legislature*

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

Volume III

June 17, 1969 to July 2, 1969

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1st Special Session

January 6, 1970 to February 7, 1970

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KENNEBEC JOURNAL
AUGUSTA, MAINE

He returned to Maine and had a bill introduced in the Maine legislature in 1869 to have them settle on public unsettled lands but it was "indefinitely postponed." He presented the bill again at the next regular session a year later. It passed and he became Maine's first and only Commissioner of Immigration. He returned to Gothenberk immediately and with the help of pastors of Lutheran and possibly other churches, selected robust young people to come to Maine. No one was accepted unless it appeared clear that he would make a good and thrifty citizen and had full passage money and some besides.

He selected very well because during the first winter no one died. You remember that those who came on the Mayflower, half of them passed away the first winter.

The first group of settlers arrived in what is now New Sweden, in Aroostook County, on July 23, 1870. The party included 22 men, 11 women and 17 children, 50 altogether. They came up the St. John River by boat to Fredericton and two boats to Andover, New Brunswick, then over the height of land into Maine at Fort Fairfield. They stopped at Caribou, settled less than 30 years before by the Hardisons, Mr. Collins and Mr. Vaughan, where the residents met them with a band, provided them with a meal and sheltered them for the night. The next morning they set out for New Sweden, 8 miles away, where the state had surveyed the land and had built six log cabins for them in separate 100 acre wooded lots. There, as stated on the monument which their descendants have erected, they gathered around their wagon train with W. W. Thomas and thanked God who had led them safely on their long journey, and for his blessing and guidance in the future; a prayer that God has most graciously answered.

After establishing the colony, Mr. Speaker, W. W. Thomas became one of your predecessors in office. He served four terms in the Maine legislature from Portland and in 1874 and again in 1875 was elected Speaker of the House.

The town of New Sweden probably does not have the best potato land in the County but it is among the most scenic. The town has an unusually pretty Lutheran church, built soon after the settlers arrived, and containing a church bell given by Mr. Thomas; a community center, called the Capitol, part of which is now used for a local history museum, with many Swedish pioneer artifacts; a cemetery bordered by Lombardy poplars, a tree which is native to Europe, to remind them of their homeland; a music shell with out of doors seats in a pretty hardwood grove named Thomas Park; a very well appointed picnic area, a most inviting spot.

The people of New Sweden hope you will come to their 100th anniversary next July, from the 22nd through the 26th. They have interesting plans for the occasion. You will be most welcome. You will be glad you came.

May I also add, the County's potato fields then will be in full bloom.

New Sweden is a contiguous town to Caribou, my district. The people from New Sweden do their shopping in Caribou and their children attend our high school in Caribou. It is, however, part of the district of Representative Harold Bragdon, the gentleman from Perham, and I thank him for giving me permission to relate to you this most interesting story.

The Chair laid before the House the first tabled and today assigned matter:

MAJORITY REPORT (6)—Committee on State Government on Resolve Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution Affecting the Apportionment of the House of Representatives" (S. P. 598) (L. D. 1769) reporting "Ought to pass" as amended by Committee Amendment "A" and MINORITY REPORT (4) reporting "Ought not to pass" (C. "A" S-387) (In Senate, Majority Report accepted and Resolve passed to be engrossed as amended by Committee Amendment "A")

Tabled—January 23, by Mr. Rideout of Manchester.

Pending—Acceptance of either Report.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Manchester, Mr. Rideout.

Mr. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, I move that we accept the Majority "Ought to pass" Report.

The SPEAKER: The gentleman from Manchester, Mr. Rideout, moves that the House accept the Majority "Ought to pass" Report.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bath, Mr. Ross.

Mr. ROSS: Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House: Last session there suddenly appeared upon the horizon a strange little bill reducing the size of this body to 96 members. It had a unanimous "ought to pass" report from the State Government Committee. I vigorously opposed it and I had to debate it four times. I had to revert to complicated examples, nostalgia, similes, stirring poetry and so forth. One of the reasons given in the regular session that this had a unanimous "ought to pass" report was that there was nobody opposed to it at the public hearing. So the committee just naturally assumed that everybody approved of it.

This year, because of that, I was fully prepared to attend that public hearing. However, the bill as printed said that they suggested keeping the size of the House about the same as it is now, between 141 and 151 members, and to divide it into districts. That was all right with me; as a matter of fact I thought that that was a pretty good idea.

However, they have now snuck on a committee amendment once again reducing the size of our House of Representatives to 96 members. My reasons now would be the same as they were then when I opposed them, if it finally gets to the enactment stage, and once again I would be forced to oppose it most vigorously. But if we are interested in speeding up this session, I certainly don't think we should let it get that far and I oppose the motion today and hope that you will vote against that motion so that you then can vote the motion "ought not to pass."

Mr. Cote of Lewiston then requested a roll call.

The SPEAKER: For the Chair to order a roll call it must have the expressed desire of one fifth of the members present and voting. All members desiring a roll call vote will vote yes; those opposed will vote no.

A vote of the House was taken, and more than one fifth of the members present having expressed a desire for a roll call, a roll call was ordered.

The SPEAKER: The pending question is on the motion of the gentleman from Manchester, Mr. Rideout, that the House accept the Majority "Ought to pass" Report. If you are in favor of accepting the "Ought to pass" Report you will vote yes; if you are opposed you will vote no.

ROLL CALL

YEA — Allen, Bourgoin, Cottrell, Cummings, Dyar, Eustis, Farnham, Fecteau, Fortier, A. J.; Fortier, M.; Fraser, Goodwin, Henley, Huber, Lawry, LePage, Lewin, Lund, Martin, Mitchell, Moreshead, Norris, Rideout, Rocheleau, Susi.

NAY — Baker, Barnes, Bedard, Benson, Bernier, Binnette, Birt, Boudreau, Bragdon, Brennan, Brown, Buckley, Bunker, Burnham, Carrier, Carter, Casey, Chick, Clark, C. H.; Clark, H. G.; Coffey, Cote, Couture, Cox, Croteau, Curtis, Cushing, Donaghy, Dudley, Durgin, Emery, Erickson, Evans, Faucher, Finemore, Foster, Gauthier, Gilbert, Giroux, Hall, Hanson, Hardy, Haskell, Hawkens, Heselton, Hichens, Immonen, Jalbert, Jameson, Jutras, Kelley, R. P.; Keyte, Laberge, Lebel, Levesque, Lewis, Lincoln, MacPhail, Marquis, Marsteller, McKinnon, McNally, Meisner, Millett, Mills, Morgan, Mosher, Nadeau, Page, Payson, Porter, Pratt, Ricker, Ross, Sahagian, Scott, C. F.; Scott, G. W.; Shaw, Snow, Soulas, Temple, Thompson, Trask, Vincent, Wheeler, White, Wight, Williams, Wood.

ABSENT — Berman, Carey, Chandler, Corson, Crommett, Crosby, Curran, D'Alfonso, Dam, Danton, Dennett, Drigotas, Good Hariman, Hewes, Hunter, Johnston, Kelleher, Kelley, K. F.; Kilroy, Lee, Leibowitz, McTeague, Noyes, Ouellette, Quimby, Rand, Richard-

son, G. A.; Richardson, H. L.; Santoro, Sheltra, Starbird, Stillings, Tanguay, Tyndale, Waxman.

Yes, 25; No, 89; Absent, 36.

The SPEAKER: Twenty-five having voted in the affirmative and eighty-nine in the negative, the motion does not prevail.

Thereupon, the Minority "Ought not to pass" Report was accepted in non-concurrence and sent up for concurrence.

The Chair laid before the House the second tabled and today assigned matter:

Bill "An Act relating to Rate of Interest on Real Property Taxes" (H. P. 1335) (L. D. 1664)

Tabled—January 23, by Mr. Dyar of Strong.

Pending—Passage to be engrossed.

On motion of Mr. Gauthier of Sanford, retabled pending passage to be engrossed and specially assigned for tomorrow.

The Chair laid before the House the third tabled and today assigned matter:

Bill "An Act Creating a Commission to Study Means of Increasing the Effectiveness and Capability of the Maine Legislature" (S. P. 604) (L. D. 1784) (In Senate, passed to be engrossed as amended by Senate Amendment "A" S-385)

Tabled — January 23, by Mr. Hichens of Eliot.

Pending—Passage to be engrossed in concurrence.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Eliot, Mr. Hichens.

Mr. HICHENS: Mr. Speaker and Members of the House: I rise in opposition to this bill on the basic principles that we have too many study committees and subsequent reports already.

We as legislators are loaded down each year with study reports from various commissions appointed by the Governor or by vote of the legislative bodies. These reports take time and cost money. On frequent occasions I have seen fellow representatives cast them into the waste baskets without even opening the cover. Seldom is action taken on the findings of these commissions during a legislative

session, and yet the studies go on and on. I have several cartons of these reports stored away, most of which I have read over and over only to find that no action has been, nor probably will be taken on them. Already we have a Governor's Task Force report on our desk and an accompanying L. D. concerning government reorganization which covers some of the aspects in this bill.

The sponsor of this bill expressed the desire in his publicized letter to the screening committee to have the "best informed, the most efficient and the strongest Legislature in the United States." I heartily agree with his wishes. But no study committee is needed, in my estimation, to bring us the answers. The great need is to get men elected who believe in the people they represent and will sacrifice their desires for personal gain and recognition in order to serve these people. Study commissions can do little to change men's minds.

If members of both parties and the people of the State of Maine want a more efficient, a better informed and a stronger Legislature, this is the year to do so, not by recommendations of a legislative study committee being paid for their efforts, but at the polling places throughout this state in June and November.

I therefore make a motion that this bill and its accompanying papers be indefinitely postponed.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Bath, Mrs. Goodwin.

Mrs. GOODWIN: Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House: It seems very strange to me that last Friday we voted \$75,000 to study the Maine Sugar Industry, but we can't spend \$30,000 to study ourselves. And I would think that after the circus we went through on Friday that perhaps we could use a little study.

Thereupon, on motion of Mr. Rideout of Manchester, retabled pending the motion of Mr. Hichens of Eliot to indefinitely postpone and specially assigned for tomorrow.