

According to the Directory
of the State of Oklahoma,
1931, p. 83.

Allen G. Nichols of
Wenoka represented the
23rd District and was
up for re-election in 1934.

Honorable J. Berry King,
Attorney General
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Sir:

News dispatches quote you as saying that the issue in the next campaign will be "Murrayism".

Having in mind to run for re-election to the State Senate, I accept this as an issue, seeking to bind no other candidate for State or District offices. By your stand, if you have been correctly quoted, I assume that you oppose every accomplishment of the present administration because it smacks of your idea of "Murrayism". I assume, and will therefore charge until denied by you, that you will propose to undo all that has been accomplished on the ground that "Murrayism" is interwoven with these great reforms. In the light of your statement, I desire to submit the following facts and questions to you in the sincere hope that you will be fair and fearless enough to give the people your answer:

First: The present administration created the Oklahoma Tax Commission which has already collected more back taxes than it has cost to run and operate that department. Both friend and foe admit the efficacy of this legislation.

Do you propose to junk this law and return to the conditions as they existed prior to its creation?

Second: Governor Murray, by his insistent demand and constant hammering, has reduced the cost of State Government from Thirty-four to Twenty-one million dollars - - - an actual reduction of Thirteen Million Dollars.

Do you condemn this form of "Murrayism", and will you tell the people that you propose to put the expenses back at the enormous figures where Murray found them?

Third: Governor Murray and the Tax Commission advocated and secured a change in the County Excise Boards, to the end that those who levy the taxes do not also spend the money. This change is universally hailed as a "boon" to the taxpayers. Friend and foe alike applaud this change.

Will you dare voice your disapproval of this measure and do you advocate its repeal?

Fourth: The so-called "Murrayism" as designated by yourself was responsible for the passage of an adequate income tax, which in normal times will produce between Five and Six Million Dollars; three-fourths of which goes to the common schools of the State - - a guarantee to every school child that it may expect a full school year.

Do you pledge the 20,000 school teachers, the 45,000 members of school boards, the 750,000 school children and their parents that you will assist in junking this wholesome guarantee of a full school year? Do you propose its repeal?

Fifth: Governor Murray and the Tax Commission early advocated changes in the Gross Production Tax law to the end that producing companies should withhold and pay the three percent tax for royalty owners, thus saving the State the expense of trying to collect this tax. Thousands of royalty owners live outside the State and paid no tax. This was passed over the violent opposition of producing companies and their friends in both houses of the Legislature. Now this royalty (all of it) is collected from those who live without the State as well as those who live within, without cost to the State.

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Do you condemn this wholesome change in the law because Murray and the Tax Commission pointed out the necessary changes? Will you state plainly whether you favor or oppose this law?

Sixth: The Governor, as Chairman of the State Board of Equalization, with the able co-operation and assistance of the Tax Commission, has increased the valuations of public service corporations and utilities approximately one hundred million dollars, and at the same time lowered the taxes on the home owner and the real property owner. In other words, taxes were "equalized". Each of these corporations refused to appeal to the Supreme Court from the decision of the State Board, thus disclosing the justness of this huge increased valuation.

Do you condemn this form of "Murrayism"? Do you promise and propose to reduce these valuations and to increase the tax rate on the small property owner --- the recipient of this increase? To these specific questions the people anxiously await your answer.

Seventh: At the advent of this administration Oklahoma was practically the only State in the Union suffering the embarrassment of Toll Bridges. Yet you and your crowd had done nothing to rectify this form of ancient graft. Yet it remained for Governor Murray, by a single stroke of genius, to strike the Toll Bridge incubus a death blow -- and in doing so received the plaudits of the entire State and Nation.

Do you condemn this part of the so-called "Murrayism" and will you tell the people whether you will advocate a return of the Toll Bridge Evil?

Eighth: The Murray administration from the outset tried to secure the reduction of the Ad Valorem Tax on the homes and farms of the people. You went about over the State opposing this reduction during the firebell campaign. The Governor finally got this amendment submitted to the people and you, I am sure, have found out by what a huge majority it carried.

Do you proclaim your opposition to this form of tax reduction because it was labeled "Murrayism"? Wherein has this kind of "Murrayism" hurt the State?

Ninth: The Governor at the outset, tried to bring about reforms in the School Land Commission. He was backed in this endeavor by the people as a whole, notably by such distinguished citizens as Clarence Roberts, Editor Oklahoma-Farmer Stockman. After the most heroic efforts and over the opposition of your friends in the Senate the shameful conditions of this Commission were "aired" to the people disclosing a ten million dollar loss and seventeen million dollars in delinquent loans. The report of the investigating committee, signed by friends and foes alike of the Governor and adopted by the entire Senate without a dissenting vote, disclosed a condition of political racketeering in school land money akin to the scandals in the Harding Administration. The Governor appeared even on the floor of the Senate to secure legislation to remedy this appalling condition. Bills were passed to cure these evils.

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Do you condemn the Governor for his zealous efforts to protect the school children's money? Will you please point out where this feature of "Murrayism" should be condemned? Will you advocate the undoing of these reforms?

Tenth: The audit of the School Land Commission records, as ordered and instituted by the Governor, disclosed a theft by Sam Pollard of \$50,000.00. This has been almost a year ago and the matter was referred to your office for recovery of the money and such other action as you deemed necessary to protect the school children. Up to date you have done nothing about it.

Don't you think you should quit posing and cussing the Governor of the State long enough to bring suit to recover these pilfered funds? Would not your "outbursts" have more effect if you would clean your own house and use your office to help the State reduce to its possession these funds, sacred as they are?

Eleventh: This administration advocated and secured the passage of a Corporation License Tax law by the terms of which all corporations doing business in this State are compelled to pay a certain tax upon their capital stock, the proceeds of which goes into the general fund to run the State, the schools, etc.

Will you publicly and through a friendly press voice your opposition to this law in particular or to any other of the great accomplishments heretofore pointed out?

Twelfth: In the early part of his administration the Governor, by his own ingenuity, forced a certain gas company to reduce its rates to consumers in forty cities and towns of the State.

Will you denounce this as being "Murrayism", and will you tell the people thereby affected that you will propose to put the rates back where they were?

Thirteenth: Time and space will not permit an individual review of all these reforms, but I call your attention to some of the major ones, such as: passage of an equitable Inheritance Tax law; passage and adoption of Gasoline Tax Collection law, preventing the loss of gasoline tax; amendments to Workmen's Compensation laws whereby the laborers are better protected and especially their families, in the event of the worker's death; passage of laws reducing the number of District Judges in the State; ~~advocacy and passage of laws reducing~~ the salaries of all elected State officials; passage of laws making uniform the salaries of all county officials and repealing local bills wherein county officials salaries had been raised; this particular law lowered the salaries of practically all county officials over the State; passage of adequate laws for the taxation of banks, an unheard of thing in Oklahoma; passage of a highly satisfactory highway law, creating thereunder one of the best and most efficient Highway Commissions that ever existed in this or any other State.

Will you, in clear, unequivocal language state your position on each and every one of the major reforms above mentioned? Will you be fair and honest enough with the people of the State to inform them which ones you will oppose or suggest the repeal of because they might be tainted with "Murrayism"? Murray advocated all of these.

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Fourteenth: In addition to all the matters listed above, the present administration has advocated and moulded into law the following, which might be classed as minor reforms by you, such as: measures to relieve the poor and indigent; measures permitting the people to pay their back taxes without penalties; measures permitting the payment of Ad Valorem taxes without payment of paving taxes; measures authorizing the payment of paving taxes with paving bonds, a great relief; measures providing that the State shall pay all expenses of State wide elections; measures affecting the transportation of school pupils and many measures relating to schools and their continued existence. All of these were a part of the program and thus tainted with "Murrayism".

Which of these do you oppose? Tell the people of the State what injury hath been wrought because these laws are interwoven with "Murrayism".

Fifteenth: By a brilliant stroke of statesmanship, the Governor was able to provide the poor children of the State with a million free text books, much to the chagrin of his personal enemies. While you are emerging from your secret "cabal" proclaiming that "Murrayism" will be the only issue in the next campaign, the Governor is placing free school books in the hands of needy children, thus making it possible for them to participate in Oklahoma's free school system.

What are you going to say to the poor people of the State, the recipients of this bounteous gift? Please be very explicit in your denunciation of this brand of "Murrayism".

Since all the above and foregoing were advocated and brought about by the Governor, I assume you oppose them all because of their authorship. This program cannot be separated from "Murrayism". They are inseparably bound together. Therefore, I conclude that you are duty bound to oppose everyone of them and since you have declared them to be the issue in the next campaign you will advocate the repeal of all of them.

Having in mind to bind myself only, and no other, I accept the issue. I do not think that great reforms like these should be classified as Murray or Anti-Murray, but if that be the case, I am glad to have had a part in assisting in their passage. I will stand or fall upon my record in assisting in the passage of all of them.

I hope you will find time to give explicit answers to questions above propounded.

~~Very truly yours,~~
State Senator
23rd District.

P.S. If you will ask any taxpayer he will gladly exhibit his tax receipt showing his taxes less than last year. Fact is, taxes are getting lower and lower. This is THE ONLY ADMINISTRATION that HAS ACTUALLY REDUCED TAXES.

Will you publicly denounce this form of Murray "Heresy"?

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BILL MURRAY AND I EACH HAD A CANDIDATE FOR SUPERIOR JUDGE

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