

CHAPTER XXV

The National Association of Secretaries of State

Officers for 1936-1937

President: HON. THEODORE DAMMANN
Secretary of State of Wisconsin

Vice-President: HON. DWIGHT H. BROWN
Secretary of State of Missouri

Treasurer: HON. GRACE A. REAVY
Former Executive Deputy Secretary of
State of New York

Corresponding Secretary: HON. JOHN B. WILSON
Secretary of State of Georgia

Recording Secretary: HON. FRANCES E. RYAN
Deputy Secretary of State of Kansas

Executive Committee
(in addition to the officers)

Secretary of State of Massachusetts
HON. FREDERIC W. COOK

HON. ROBERT A. GRAY
Secretary of State of Florida

HON. MIKE HOLM
Secretary of State of Minnesota

UPON suggestion by Honorable John W. Morton, Secretary of State of Tennessee, and after correspondence with the secretaries of states, a National Association of the Secretaries of States and Territories was perfected in a meeting held

and Honorable Louis C. Laylin of Ohio, secretary.

The second meeting of the National Association was held in Nashville, Tennessee, May 25, 1905, upon the invitation of Secretary of State Morton.



THEODORE DAMMANN
President

in the Tennessee Building of the World's Exposition at St. Louis, Missouri, September 28, 1904.

Letters were received from the secretaries of thirty-seven states favoring the movement. Upon the motion of Honorable P. E. Hanson, Secretary of State of Minnesota, Honorable John W.

Morton of Tennessee was made chairman,

In recent years, national conferences of the Association have been held annually. During the biennium 1935-1937, the eighteenth conference was held in St. Paul and Duluth, Minnesota, upon invitation of Secretary of State Mike Holm, of Minnesota, July 28 to August 1, 1935. Secretary of State Edward J. Flynn and his executive deputy, Honorable Grace A. Reavy, acted as hosts to the nineteenth conference, July 13-16, 1936.

The first two days of this meeting were spent in business in Albany and entertainment at Saratoga Springs. The members were conducted through the Department of State of New York, with its several divisions, and were addressed by Governor Lehman at Saratoga Springs. On the third day, they were received by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt at the President's home at Hyde Park, and were later entertained at West

Point and at Secretary of State Flynn's home at Riverdale-on-Hudson. Meetings at the New York State Capitol in Albany and at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York included discussion of law and election legislation, corporation registration and taxation laws, alcoholic beverage control, trademark registration, state publications, and motor vehicle legislation.

The twentieth conference will be held September 22-25, 1937, in San Antonio, Texas, at the invitation of Governor Allred and Secretary of State Edward Clark, of Texas. It is expected that action will be taken upon proposed uniform trade-mark legislation, and standards for state publications, as well as other matters which the association has had under consideration.

Projects for 1937-1938

Four specific projects are being undertaken by the National Association at the present time: (1) Achievement of a uniform quality in state publications; (2) formulation and adoption of uniform trade-mark legislation; (3) fair taxation of non-profit corporations; and (4) formulation and adoption of uniform legislation concerning the administration of elections.

State Publications

In so far as state governments conduct publishing, it is largely centralized in the office of the secretary of state. The National Association feels that it might well seek to set up standards for state publications, in order that comparative information might be available from all of the states in as nearly uniform form as is practical. The Standing Committee on State Publications is composed of Secretary of State, Dwight H. Brown, of Missouri, as chairman; Miss Florence J. Ranney, Division of Publications and Publicity of the New York Department of State; and Mr. George M. Neffner, Editor and Statistician, Department of State of Ohio. This committee held its first meeting at the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C., January 21, 1937, in conjunction with a meeting of the executive committee of the National Association at the Third General Assembly of the Council of State Governments. As its first work it is studying present state manuals or year-

books in detail, and is endeavoring to formulate standards for such manuals, especially as to informational content and form of presentation. The committee's goal is to make available to government officials and the public generally, through state yearbooks, comprehensive information on the several state governments, in a form which will make comparison between states possible.

The Standing Committee on State Publications is also considering the feasibility of state papers which would give publicity to administrative orders issued by the various departments of the state governments. A publication of this sort would be similar in nature to the newly established *Federal Register*. It is thought that the same demand from government officials, members of the bar, and others, for the centralization and publication of such administrative orders, which resulted in the establishment of the *Federal Register*, will shortly require similar action by the states. At its first meeting the committee conferred with Major B. R. Kennedy, Editor of the *Federal Register*, who discussed at length the objects of that publication, and the problems which have arisen in issuing it.

Uniform Trade-mark Legislation

The National Association is formulating an acceptable uniform law for the registration of trade-marks. In a number of states investigation has been made concerning the requirements of industry as well as the state government in this matter. Through its clearing house, the National Association is bringing together the results of these legislative investigations in the several states. It is hoped that agreement may be reached whereby the interests and convenience of business firms may be best protected, and at the same time the public interest may be served as well.

Taxation of Non-Profit Organizations

The executive committee has further decided that the Association shall undertake to solve the problem of proper taxation of nominally non-profit corporations, which, according to their characters, are organized for cultural purposes only, but which are, in fact, large revenue-earning concerns.

Administration of Elections

The past year has again shown the need for simplification of the method of preparing election ballots in most states. Complicated legislative directions to departments of state in this matter, coupled with numerous frivolous filings of petitions, have shown the need for agreement among the several states upon a simple method of preparation of ballots by departments of state, which will, at the same time, adequately protect the rights of serious political office seekers.

Services Summary

(A more detailed description of these Services will be found on page 41.)

At its eighteenth conference, in St. Paul, the National Association, by resolution, authorized the executive officers of the organization to establish a secretariat of the organization in cooperation with the Council of State Governments. This arrangement has been perfected, and in May, 1936, Mr. Stewart Nelson joined the staff of the Council to supervise the work of this Secretariat. The Secretaries of State Section of the Council of State Governments serves each of the individual secretaries of state, as well as the National Association as an organization. The section conducts research on particular subjects at the request either of individual secretaries, or of a committee of the National Association. It

serves also as a public relations division of the National Association, and issues bulletins from time to time which may be of interest to secretaries of state. One page of State Government is devoted each month to the activities of the secretaries. The Secretaries of State Section also serves the National Association in matters such as the organization of national meetings. It assists in making arrangements for such meetings as the officers or committees of the National Association may call from time to time.

In addition to the services which this section renders to the individual departments of state and the National Association, it contributes directly to other sections of the Council of State Governments. A considerable amount of information concerning state administrative officials and the organization of the several state governments, for use in the Book of the States has been contributed by secretaries of state. Inquiries from public officials which concern matters administered generally by departments of state are referred to this section for study and reply. In the majority of states, the department of state must assume the role of information bureau for the state government, along with its other varied duties. The information which the secretaries furnish flows, in this way, through the Council to other administrative officials and to legislators, as well as to the general public in all forty-eight states.

