

VERBATIM REPORT OF JOINT DEBATE BETWEEN WEST AND BOOTH

BOOTH TELLS HOW TIMBER LAND HOLDINGS ACQUIRED

Candidate for Senator Reviews Land Fraud Prosecutions and Accuses West of Being Burns Detective, Acting Through Political Motives.

KLAMATH TRANSACTION IS REVIEWED AT LENGTH

BOOTH EXPLAINS HIS POSITION

"I take it that everyone in this presence understands that I am not here simply in my own defense as a private citizen or to attempt even to defend a good name, but I am here because I am the nominee of the Republican party for the United States senate, seeking to represent the people of Oregon in the United States senate, because 70,000 people in this state gave me their vote at the primary—more votes than was cast for any other candidate in any party for office.

"What I owe to them and to all people who are inclined to give me their support, I desire to now pay to the utmost farthing, that my state may be fairly represented in the national halls of congress by the majority party of the state, and that I will do, unless I am proven unworthy by the governor of this state or some of his supporters.

"Now as to political manipulation. I never received a favor of the commissioner of the general land office, or any senator or any congressman, and hear me when I tell you that I have never asked it, never wrote a letter that affected any title to a single acre of our land.

"Why did not Mr. West tell you that all the lands, more than a million acres that we have handled, more than 99 per cent of it—more than 95 per cent of it—had the title initiated before our company was organized? I speak from the records.

"And furthermore, men, never has there been any actual disposition and final disposition of an acre that we own; not an acre; and there never has been attacked more than five claims, less than one-tenth of one per cent of the lands that we have handled, and you see that we go up in the Royal Baking Powder's class, our governor notwithstanding."

WHERE did Mr. Booth get his timber?

This was the theme of the great meeting last Friday evening when Governor West presented proofs in support of the charges that the vast timber holdings of the Booth-Kelly company was secured through fraud, and that A. Booth, the head of the company, and now a candidate for United States senator, undertook to refute the accusation.

According to previous arrangements made at the opening statement, speaking for 30 minutes. Governor West followed, occupying an hour. Mr. Booth concluded the debate, being allotted 15 minutes for the purpose. According to previous announcement The Journal now publishes the full stenographic report of all that was said by the two speakers at the opening statement. Mr. Booth said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I am not here for applause. All that I ask for, except the attention of the people, is a fair hearing from open minded voters, and I beg every friend to cease from applause that we may hurry this thing along. I desire to get this thing over as soon as possible, and I am sure that there is any disturbance it shall not be deducted from the time of either speaker.

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OPPOSITIONS IN GREAT POLITICAL DEBATE FRIDAY NIGHT



Left to right—Oswald West, governor of Oregon, and R. A. Booth, Republican candidate for United States senator, who debated Friday evening the question of how Mr. Booth acquired his timber holdings and his fitness for the office he seeks.

Governor West Bares Details of Booth's Timber Land Deals Masterly Presentation Brings Cheers From Great Audience

GOVERNOR WEST DRAWS A COMPARISON

"There was a man in the prison who had a good record while there; he had earned his credits and when he asked me for a pardon it was given to him, a pardon that set forth his record and carried out to the people of the state the fact that he was a man that was trying to do good, and asking the help of those with whom he might come in contact; and after a time word came back from an adjoining state that this man was being given a position as a guard on the walls of a prison in another state; and I saw a picture of that man walking that wall with his rifle, an emblem of authority, as it were, watching the men in the prison, and I thought I saw a prisoner approach him and say to him, 'Brother, you are one of us; you are not of the people on the outside; you are one of us; you have worn our stripes; you have eaten our food and you have walked to your cell to the time of the lock step; you have answered to the count. Now come, brother, give us the gun that we may break these unnatural bounds and once more prey upon the people.'"

"And my mind went to another picture, and I thought of the help that I had given Mr. Booth in his hour of trouble, and I thought of the good things that I had said of him from time to time. I wished him the best in the world. But when the time came that Mr. Booth, notwithstanding his transgressions in the past, presumed to aspire to the office of United States senator, then it was no longer a personal matter with me, no longer a matter of duty between me as an individual and Mr. Booth and his brother, but it was a public duty, and I saw a picture of Mr. Booth armed with his commission, his emblem of authority, at his post of duty in Washington; on one hand was the people, on the other the interests, and among them the Kribbes and the Blodgets and the Joneses and the other big timber operators, and I could see them coming to the senator and saying:

"'Brother, you are not of the people, you are one of us. (Applause.) You have walked with us through the magnificent forests of Oregon. We have bought railroad lands together at a low price; we have taken advantage of the fact that we held the key to the situation, and we have made the humble homesteaders give us claims that were worth four or five thousand dollars apiece for five hundred dollars. We have taken unfortunate brothers and paid them a paltry sum to assist us in robbing the people of the state of Oregon of their birthright. Come, give us the power that you have and we will tear away these unnatural fetters that are protecting the natural resources of this great nation and we will once more roam in green pastures. We, the self-anointed, are the ones to care for these great resources, not the common herd.' That is the picture I saw."

"And I will tell you, my friends, it is my duty not only as a public official, but as an individual, to fight a man whose record of the past shows that he is a man who is still flickering in his bosom which may be fanned to flame by the entreaties of his friends who would meet him in Washington in the late hours of the night. (Applause, mixed with cheers of 'Booth!')

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am here to make some charges against Mr. Booth, who is a candidate for the United States senatorship. In the court of public opinion of the state of Oregon this is an indictment; Oswald West, plaintiff, versus R. A. Booth, defendant. R. A. Booth is accused by this indictment of having looted the public domain, proven unlawful as a public official, and of being a pious fraud, as follows, to wit: (Laughter.)

"Governor Makes His Charge. "That the said R. A. Booth has resorted to fraud, violated the laws of the land and betrayed his trust as a public official in order to add to his timber holdings and his wealth; that he has ignored the laws of the state of Oregon and used his power of place to prey upon his less fortunate brothers, has sought through monopolization of the natural resources, which are the birthright of all, and thus enabled the house of Booth to levy tribute upon generations to come; that he has borne false witness and caused others to commit perjury in order that he might retain such of his holdings as were gotten unlawfully; that he has for years been deceiving the brethren of his church, and that he has led them to believe he was a Christian in spirit and truth when in fact he has merely used his religion as a cloak to cover his predatory activities. (Applause and cheers with hisses.)

"Dated at Portland, Multnomah county, Oregon, this twenty-third day of October, 1914, and signed Oswald West."

"The witnesses are the records of the federal court and the records of the state of Oregon."

"Governor West: 'That is what I am here for. (Applause.) Now, my friends, Mr. Booth in his Albany speech said 'The title to almost the whole of our lands was secured by the railroad company and settlers years before our company was even organized. The small fraction remaining was honestly acquired by purchase from owners who at their own instance, initiated their title and perfected their rights. We never exploited the public domain by locating people thereon.' We never exploited the public domain by locating people thereon, as has frequently been charged against timber concerns. Don't forget that statement. It was specifically to state that we have never by any method wrongfully acquired title to an acre of land. No one knows this better than representatives of the government who investigated."

"Extract From Brief Filed. "Now my friends, I am going to read from a brief supplied by the government when the case in which Mr. Booth's company was interested went up to the United States circuit court of appeals. The decision in that case was rendered by Judges Morrow, Ross and Gilbert. This brief was prepared by United States attorney long after the time of Henry and Durey in Albany, 1902, and January, 1903. It is the United States attorney's own party, whose appointment was secured by many of Mr. Booth's friends and who was known as 'Crumbaugh's brief' that Mr. Booth would be a senatorial candidate.

"Now I want you to remember this when we start in, that between January, 1902, and January, 1903, I am Mr. Booth, Senator Booth's brother, was secretary of the company and receiver of the United States land office at Roseburg, Or."

"Now Mr. Booth has some poor relations. One was named Alice La Raut; one was named Stephen La Raut; another Lucy La Raut; and another Ethel La Raut. (Laughter.) These four relatives took claims on what was known as 'Crumbaugh's creek,' which I understand is a branch of a river which runs into one fork of the Willamette river, in the territory in which Mr. Booth has been operating."

"The United States attorney in his brief says: 'Alice La Raut, Stephen La Raut, Lucy La Raut and Ethel La Raut took their claims, under a prior agreement with Booth, that they were to be paid one hundred dollars each for doing so, over and over the costs and expenses of the claims. Edward Jordan entered his claim under a similar agreement with John F. Kelly."

BOOTH IN CLOSING SPEECH ENTERS EMPHATIC DENIALS

Money Paid to Eugene Paper Was for Advertising; Lands Which Are Said to Have Been Bought From Relatives Declared Still Theirs.

LA RAUTS BOUGHT FOR THEMSELVES

"Five cases were involved. Four of them were LaRaut cases. The evidence shows that Ethel La Raut, one of the ladies here, came to me, asking about a timber claim; that I said to her that we would furnish the money, carry it, sell it with our own timber, if we sold it; or cut it and pay her by the thousand feet, if we ever operated there, which we never have. That was my testimony; that was her testimony. No other person could possibly know the facts. It was corroborated by the bookkeeper of the company, who sits here."

"Judge Gilbert's decision was rendered on this position, which every man has a right to believe or not, as you like: That the La Rauts, whom you see here, Mr. Dugbar, who is our secretary, that George Kelly, who is our manager, and John Kelly, and myself, swore falsely. If you want to believe that, believe it."

"The debate was concluded by Mr. Booth, who was allotted 30 minutes in which to reply to Governor West's charges. Mr. Booth said:

"Ladies and gentlemen: I will speak as rapidly as I can. You have heard accusations by the governor, of the Weyerhaeusers, of the Hammonds, of the railroad, of Geer and a lot of other people, or intimating that these people were associated with us. Any statement that any Weyerhaeuser or Hammond or anyone that he has named is now or ever was associated with the Booth-Kelly company is false. (Applause. Cries of 'Prove it.' Also hisses.)

"Give me a chance and I will prove it. (The speaker could not proceed on account of uproar in the audience and the chairman rapped vigorously for order.)

Mr. Booth: 'Mr. Chairman, the manager of our company, the secretary of our company, are on this platform. Here is Mr. Dunbar. (Laughter.) Here are men to say whether the statements made are true or not. (General uproar.) Just a moment.' (General uproar.) Just a moment.' (Chairman Sabin: 'Gentlemen, let's have it play.') Mr. Booth: 'All I ask is fair play.' (The uproar continued.)

Governor West: 'Please give Mr. Booth a chance. Please do. Now he is entitled to his time and we want to hear what he has to say.' A voice: 'All right, Ozzie.' (Applause.) Mr. Booth: 'Will you hear me, or not?' (Applause.) A voice: 'The statement is false.' A voice: 'Good.' Another voice: 'Cut it out.' (Uproar.) Booth: 'Now a word. The statement that I said was false—'

Interruptions Are Continued. A voice (interrupting): 'Prove it.' Mr. Booth: 'I did prove it. Here is our secretary—'

(The uproar in audience prohibited the speaker continuing.) Mr. Booth: 'All right. Mr. Dixon, the manager, is here, and I will call on him, and then I will make you this proposition: Any man—and I do it on the authority of the manager—whom the chairman of the meeting has named, and I will examine our stock books, and I will defray the cost of it—'

(The speaker was interrupted with applause and uproar.) Mr. Booth: 'Will you pay for it?' Mr. Booth: 'Yes, I will pay for it.' (Applause.) (The uproar continued and the chairman rapped for order.)

Governor West: 'Give Mr. Booth a chance, please.' Mr. Booth: 'After this is done I will refer to the other charges here. Please give me an opportunity.' A voice: 'How much did you give him to testify?' Mr. Booth: 'Mr. Chairman, men, listen just a minute. Mr. McLeod, I am just informed, the secretary of the Hammond Lumber company, is in the house, and I will ask him to corroborate what I have said.' (Mr. McLeod here stepped to the front of the stage, and was greeted with applause mixed with hisses.)

Mr. Booth: 'Now just a word. (The uproar continued.) I want to ask you, ladies and gentlemen—'

(The chairman rapped vigorously for order.) Booth Asks to Be Heard. Mr. Booth: 'Let me ask you whether I am to be given a chance to answer the charges that were made. Will you hear me or not?' (The speaker said 'yes.') Mr. Booth: 'All right. You give me the chance. That statement that was made has been pronounced false by three men besides myself—'

(Cries of 'Who?' and general uproar.) Mr. Booth: 'I want to talk to you now about the matter that was referred to in the brief of an attorney. I will not use the brief of any attorney, but I will tell you what is in the evidence and in the judge's decision. Please listen. These poor mountain relatives of mine, two of them are on this platform, and I am going to ask them to arise in a moment that you may see them and then tell you the testimony of the case that is in this book.' (The ladies here stood up on the platform, and were greeted with cheers.)

Mr. Booth: 'Gentlemen, I want to ask you whether a man is to be condemned unheard?' (The chairman rapped for order.) A voice: 'Let's hear Miss Hobbs.' Chairman Sabin: 'We are here, ladies and gentlemen, for a serious business. Governor West was listened to patiently and carefully. Now in the name of Portland and in the name of common sense and good business let's give Senator Booth a chance to be heard. Let's not interrupt any more. The hour is growing late. Let's hear just a few words and make up our minds thereafter.' (Applause.)

Booth Explains Letter. Mr. Booth: 'I will dwell most of the time on the cases at issue; but just a few words about a few things that I have never came to my support until after the governor made his charges in Lane county, after he denied the statements that I had made, and that was proved by 14 affidavits. That is what brought the guard to my support.' (The letter that was read here in relation to money that I paid the Guard's manager came to me soliciting money for advertising. We had never advertised. (Laughter.) I gave him the \$40, and he never returned it. (Applause.) No such letter as was read ever came to me from him, nor any one else. It is a falsehood out of whole cloth. (Applause.)

"What a little! He said something about me introducing a bill by which we collected toll. I never introduced any bill that had reference to any toll, never collected a dollar. Judge him by these statements."

"And now to the record as to the LaRaut cases, to which he referred."

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