

THE POLITICAL CAREER OF  
ERNEST WHITWORTH MARLAND

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this work is to analyze the public career of Ernest Whitworth Marland, a congressman from 1932 until 1934 and the tenth governor of Oklahoma. Marland's life and political career were molded by the economic depression in the United States. He matured in a world of industrial activity which imbued him with a spirit of individualism which brought him two fortunes. After he lost his last and greatest private fortune he, like many other Americans in the early days of the depression, questioned the American economic system. Marland turned to the government for answers. His personal ambition, coupled with his faith in the power of government to rule wisely and efficiently, led him into a political career in which he sought to bring Oklahoma into line with the national recovery program of Franklin D. Roosevelt. As governor he began a "Little New Deal," but it suffered when confronted with the realities of human nature and politics. Marland's own personal ambitions likewise suffered when he was defeated in senatorial contests in 1936 and 1938, but he contributed much to Oklahoma. His energetic efforts to bring the full force of national recovery to the state helped alleviate the suffering of his fellow Oklahomans. The focus of the thesis is upon Marland as a political figure; national and state developments are mentioned as they relate to his career.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE BEGINNINGS: FORTUNES GAINED AND LOST

After the Civil War, the United States experienced a period of adjustment and change. In the West lay vast frontiers waiting to be explored and settled; in the South the people began the task of rebuilding their society on new foundations from the ruins of the old. The North, having suffered minimal physical damage during the war, turned its attention to the development of its resources and the expansion of industry. Technological advances, an abundant supply of labor, and improved techniques of marketing promised great wealth to people innovative and energetic enough to apply their talents to industrial development. Great financial empires were built by industrious Americans such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and J. Pierpont Morgan. The success of these men and thousands of other entrepreneurs inspired a spirit of optimism and ambition in their fellow Americans who held the hope for future material success. Recurring stories of success and upward social mobility instilled in Americans a pride and faith in the American system which offered the chance for fulfillment of their dreams.<sup>1</sup>

Symbolic of this seemingly boundless ambition and activity was the western Pennsylvania city of Pittsburgh. Located at the juncture of the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongahela rivers, it was the hub of

industrial activity in the Northeast. The three rivers gave the city ready access both to raw materials and to markets. The surrounding countryside, rich in coal and iron ore, made Pittsburgh the center for the steel industry which formed the backbone of the nation. The factories in this vibrant city sent massive columns of smoke billowing skyward, as limitless as the ambitions of the people below. It was in this bustling city of industry and optimism that Ernest Whitworth Marland was born on May 3, 1874.<sup>2</sup>

The newborn son of Alfred and Sara Marland entered a world of comfort and wealth. His father, a former teacher of English and mathematics in England, came to the United States in 1862 to enlist in the Confederacy. After a brief period as a soldier, Alfred Marland entered business. He was particularly impressed by Pittsburgh and it was there that he decided to seek his fortune. He observed the careless and wasteful binding on the cotton bales which were stacked on wharves and capitalized on this situation by inventing an iron band which would bind the cotton efficiently. As his idea gained acceptance, he established a mill in Pittsburgh for the manufacture of these iron bands. His business prospered, and he established himself and bought a house. He married Sara McLeod, who already had five children, and their union produced two daughters, Ignatia and Charlotte, and a son, Ernest.<sup>3</sup>

Alfred Marland had great expectations for his son's success, expressing the wish that Ernest would become a justice of the United States Supreme Court. Ernest was sheltered from outside influence in his early years, associating with few other children and staying close to his family. At the age of six, he was sent to a private school in



Tennessee. The Arnold School was part of Rugby, an experimental community established by Sir Thomas Hughes, the author of Tom Brown's School Days and a friend of Alfred Marland. The founders of Rugby envisioned an idyllic community both separated from the aspects of American society which they found distasteful and imitative of the English society they had left behind them. The experimental utopia eventually faltered when confronted by discord among its founders and disillusionment among its inhabitants. Alfred Marland was among the disillusioned and brought his twelve-year-old son home to Pittsburgh. Ernest attended public school in Pittsburgh for two years before enrolling in Park Institute, a preparatory school.<sup>4</sup>

In 1891, after two years at Park Institute, Marland passed his entrance examinations and entered the School of Law at the University of Michigan. He spent two uneventful years there concentrating on his studies, and, at the age of nineteen, he received his LL. B. degree and was admitted to the bar in Michigan. He returned to Pittsburgh where his father's modest fortune had been decimated by the depression of 1893 and had to seek employment in the legal profession. Because he could not be admitted to the bar in Pennsylvania until he was twenty-one, he accepted employment as a law clerk. After his admission to the bar, he was hired by J. M. Guffey, a promoter and entrepreneur who had coal and oil interests. Guffey hired Marland to inspect the oil and coal fields of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, to examine land titles, to look for mineral deposits, and to secure contracts on land which held promise for development. While engaged in this occupation, the ambitious young man began making personal investments in the

extractive industries. He gradually acquired property in the hope of discovering mineral wealth underground.<sup>5</sup> To enhance his chances of success, Marland returned to the Park Institute to study geology and civil engineering. He believed that by applying the principles of geological formation on the surface of the land he could determine the probability of mineral deposits lying underneath the surface. This scientific approach was more orderly and effective than the haphazard practice of "wildcatting," or speculative drilling.<sup>6</sup>

Marland utilized his training in examining the countryside for outcroppings or geological formations which would betray the presence of subterranean mineral deposits. He obtained leases from farmers in West Virginia where he detected possible pools of oil or gas. In the spring of 1905 his persistent efforts were rewarded when one of his wells spewed forth gas. Marland developed his investments and contracted to sell gas to potteries in nearby East Liverpool, Ohio; within a year of his initial success he accumulated his first million dollars.<sup>7</sup> The young, ambitious lawyer-turned-entrepreneur seemed assured of a prosperous future. Marland had by this time acquired a partner to share in his good fortune. Mary Virginia Collins was a stenographer in Philadelphia and the daughter of a friend of the Marland family. Her youth and energy complemented Marland's ambition and optimism, and they married in Philadelphia on November 5, 1903. Together they enjoyed the splendor afforded by his success.<sup>8</sup>

Marland's new prosperity was soon jeopardized. The banking panic in 1907 left five of Marland's bank accounts empty. At the same time, the potteries which were the source of his wealth were forced to close because of the restricted market during the depression. The combined

effect of these two events left Marland destitute, and he returned to Pittsburgh to salvage what remained of his holdings. When the potteries re-opened, he tried to renew his marketing of gas, but he found that the wells of the Standard Oil Company in adjacent fields had drained off the gas underneath his land and that his wells did not have sufficient pressure to pipe the remainder of the gas.<sup>9</sup> Marland had little capital with which to continue operations and surrendered his entire operation to a creditor, the Oil Well Supply Company. The only hope he held for the future was a letter of credit, valid at any branch of the Oil Well Supply Company, which would enable him to obtain equipment for subsequent ventures.<sup>10</sup>

Despairing of further success in the extractive industries in the North, Marland left Pennsylvania determined to seek another fortune. He decided upon either California or Oklahoma as the site for future speculation. He journeyed westward to Chicago, Illinois, to visit relatives while he charted his course for the future, armed with only the letter of credit, board money for two months, and his shaken but not destroyed ambition. While in Chicago he talked with a young army officer who had been stationed in Oklahoma. The soldier was a personal acquaintance of George Miller, the owner of the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch near Ponca City in northern Oklahoma. Marland listened attentively as the soldier spoke of the beauty of the young state and the excitement of the 101 Ranch. Marland decided to journey to the Sooner state and explore the possibilities for investment.<sup>11</sup>

Penniless and uncertain, E. W. Marland arrived at the 101 Ranch in December of 1908. He was little aware of the impact he would have on the northern prairies of Oklahoma or on the nearby town of Ponca

City. The gently undulating prairies around Ponca City were peopled only by farmers, cattle, and Indians, who had been resettled by the United States government. Ponca City was a sleepy little trading town of about 2,500 and a rendezvous for the inhabitants of the area. Marland saw magnificent opportunities for the development of the virgin prairies.<sup>12</sup>

The young Pennsylvanian was enthralled by the sights and sounds of the 101 Ranch and explored the surrounding territory with intense interest. He roamed across the grasslands of northern Oklahoma, admiring the landscape and looking for indications of mineral wealth. On an excursion with George Miller, he visited the burial ground of the Ponca Indian tribe; while he observed the burial practices of the Indians he also scrutinized the topography of the land. He noticed outcroppings of rock and gently sloping hills which revived his geological expertise and led him to speculate that underneath the shimmering sea of grass lay vast oceans of black gold. The entrepreneurial spirit churned within him as he envisioned the prospect of again enjoying the splendor of material success. Hoping to put his speculation to a successful test, he obtained leases on tracts of land which he considered likely to contain mineral wealth. He enlisted the aid of the Miller brothers in leasing land on the ranch and in convincing the local Indian landowners to lease their land.<sup>13</sup>

Fired by the prospect of discovering oil or gas, Marland took his letter of credit to the dealership of the Oil Well Supply Company in Tulsa, Oklahoma.<sup>14</sup> There he obtained the necessary supplies for his initial drilling operations. He encountered difficulty in moving the equipment to his chosen drilling sites because roads were either

non-existent in the area or far removed from the railroads where the supplies were unloaded. Because draft animals were scarce in the area, Marland employed teams of oxen and ponies to haul the material to the drilling location. After Marland and the animals endured these initial hardships, he sank his first well which failed to produce. Undaunted by this early disappointment, he continued to drill in other areas. In the spring of 1910 he struck gas for the first time. This first successful well was the vanguard of hundreds which would dot the plains in the coming years, probing the various layers of sand and rock to bring oil or gas spewing to the surface.<sup>15</sup>

Although the Indians of the region had granted Marland the right to drill on their land, they disapproved of the new phenomenon which they believed spoiled the beauty of the landscape. The wells were another of the many daily reminders of the white man's influence and control of land and life on the plains. Where once herds of buffalo roamed and grazed complacently, now the lonely towers stretched toward the sky, etched upon the horizon as reminders of a rapidly fading era. The "staff of life" which had sustained the Indians for centuries was replaced by the symbol of the white man's progress. An elderly Ponca Indian named Running After Arrow expressed his misgivings as he watched the treasure spew skyward: "Uh-h, no good, no good. Beautiful country all gone."<sup>16</sup> Despite the misgivings of a few, the drilling continued to the profit of all concerned, Indians as well as whites.

Marland's early success was followed by continual drilling and further development. He and several associates recognized the value of their bonanza and formed the 101 Ranch Oil Company to market their

product. Later they established the Kay County Gas Company, which eventually ran pipelines to Ponca City and Tonkawa. Marland became involved in all phases of the production of oil and gas, investing in exploration, production, refining, transportation, and marketing of the subterranean treasure. He founded the Marland Oil Company to establish a consolidated corporate control structure which would enable him to maintain contact with and control of all aspects of the company's management. Between 1910 and 1920 his company expanded its enterprises and spread drilling, refining, and marketing operations throughout the state. By 1920 Marland stood in command of a vast empire of tank cars, oil wells, pipelines, refineries, and offices. The red triangle symbol with the name "Marland" emblazoned across it became a familiar sight among those in the oil business.<sup>17</sup>

As Marland accumulated immense wealth in his adopted state he also attained great stature as a model citizen and employer. His oil interests employed about one-fourth of the entire working population of Ponca City and he was responsible for the rapid development of that town into an economically and culturally advanced city on the plains. The economic stimulus provided by Marland led to the growth of Ponca City from a small town of 2,521 in 1910 to a thriving industrial community of 16,136 in 1930. The population of Kay County doubled during the same time period.<sup>18</sup> In addition to the financial impetus provided by the transplanted Pennsylvanian, Ponca City benefited in numerous other ways from Marland's philanthropy. He donated money in large quantities to civic enterprises such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and church organizations. He was a major

contributor to the support of the orphan's home operated by the American Legion in Ponca City. He set aside property for an athletic field and clubhouse to be used by the citizens of his adopted hometown. He donated land and money for the construction of a Masonic lodge and an American Legion Post. A golf course was built on his property for the use of his employees and other citizens.<sup>19</sup> He demonstrated his concern for the welfare of his employees by establishing the Marland Institute for their education and constructing several hundred small frame houses on separate lots which they could purchase on easy credit terms.<sup>20</sup>

Marland's personal lifestyle was one befitting an oil baron. His English ancestry was reflected in the spectacular life he led on his estate. He built a large mansion which was complete with indoor swimming pool, expansive manicured lawns, adjoining golf course, and huge gardens with lavish arrangements of flowers and plants from many locales. Inside the mansion were lavish decorations, expensive oil paintings, and elegant furniture which displayed Marland's taste for and appreciation of the finer things in life. The mansion was the scene of many extravagant parties at which social climbers mingled and discussed niceties as well as the latest developments in the petroleum industry. Marland was the host for many poker parties at which thousands of dollars changed hands. The prohibition of alcoholic beverages did not hamper the enjoyment of the visitors to the mansion; there was always an ample supply of spirits available. Marland brought a touch of England to the prairies of Oklahoma when he organized outings for his friends. The fields and streams of northern Oklahoma were crossed and recrossed by scurrying foxes,

baying hounds, and loping horses, while on other fields Oklahomans were introduced to the sport of polo. Marland's friends and associates were treated to hunting expeditions, golf games, parties, and polo matches in a whirl of social activity which the plains had never before seen.<sup>21</sup>

Sharing the baronial splendor with Marland were his wife, Mary Virginia, and their adopted son and daughter. George and Lydie Roberts were the children of Mary's sister and came to live with their affluent relatives shortly after Marland became established in Ponca City. After the death of their parents, the two children were adopted by the Marlands in 1916. Together the family lived a life of leisure on the estate. The frolicsome atmosphere was darkened by tragedy in June of 1926 when Mary Virginia Marland died. Two years later, in July of 1928, Marland had Lydie's adoption annulled, and the pair were married.<sup>22</sup>

Marland's reputation continued to grow until he was internationally known for his keen business expertise and his philanthropy. As his business expanded and prospered, he developed interests and bank accounts throughout the Southwest. Such widespread and diverse operations required tremendous sums of capital with which to transact business, and he acquired the necessary funds by borrowing and carrying accounts with several banks in the region. In 1923 Marland, who made frequent trips to New York City for business or pleasure, came into contact with a banker in New York City who arranged a meeting between Marland and financier J. Pierpont Morgan, Jr., who was interested in the oilman's operation. Marland was well aware of the stature of the banker; consequently he believed that the meeting



held promise for both men. Morgan suggested that Marland consolidate his financial liabilities and thereby save himself the trouble of dealing with several different banks. Centralization appealed to Marland, and he agreed to consolidate his financial obligations with the "House" of Morgan. He did not suspect that the banker might have ulterior motives; he only knew that consolidation made vast sums of money available to him for expansion.<sup>23</sup>

Marland hoped that his relationship with the bankers of New York would allow his company to expand in accordance with his decisions; he was sorely disappointed. When he needed \$12,000,000 for expansion of his operation, the Morgan interests financed the entire amount by purchasing stock in the Marland Oil Company to insure their investment. Morgan's men then began interfering in the management of the company. Morgan added three new directors to the company to safeguard his investment. At Morgan's suggestion, an executive committee was formed to make policy decisions, thereby eliminating the need for the entire board to travel to New York City for consultation. This action tended to keep active members of the company out of the policy-making process. The directors from the Morgan camp exerted their influence frequently and decisively, hampering Marland's proposals for improvement by vetoing his plans when they felt that improvements were unnecessary or costly. Business decisions were outweighed by the banker's voices. Without the financial tools which he needed for the efficient direction of the company, Marland's knowledge of the petroleum industry and his keen sense for taking advantage of business opportunities went for naught. The pipelines, refineries, markets, and products Marland planned to acquire for

the enhancement of the company were never purchased. The financiers also used their positions on the executive committee to criticize Marland's labor policy; they accused him of being too friendly, lenient, and paternalistic toward his employees and officers. The New Yorkers suggested that a president be installed who would provide the type of stern leadership on the executive level which would best serve the interests of the stockholders.<sup>24</sup>

Marland sensed that he was being gradually and subtly phased out of his own operation and that the control of the company was being wrenched from the hands of those who had controlled Marland Oil since its formation. Instead of becoming a mere figurehead in his own empire, he chose to surrender control of the company. On October 30, 1928, five years after his relationship with the bankers began, he resigned as president and chairman of the board of the Marland Oil Company.<sup>25</sup> His company was soon merged with other property controlled by the financiers and was absorbed by the Continental Oil Company. The red triangle remained a prominent emblem in the petroleum industry, but the name "Conoco" replaced the original "Marland" on the signs.<sup>26</sup>

Marland and his associates lost control of their company but were quick to renew their efforts in the petroleum industry. Marland started another company in 1929 with confidence in its ultimate success, but his new venture was ill-timed. The depression hampered what success Marland might have had because the petroleum industry suffered from overproduction and low prices. Marland remained in Ponca City attempting to regain some of his holdings and achieve financial security, but his new company was not a success.<sup>27</sup>

By the 1930's the onetime lord of Ponca City was faced with a struggle for existence which he had not encountered since 1908. However, he enjoyed one more moment of glory as a reminder of his former stature. In the late 1920's Marland had contracted with sculptor Bryant Baker to construct a monument to the women who had helped tame the frontier and shape the character of Oklahoma and the West. He invested more than \$200,000 of his money to the project at a time when he still had his fortune. After he lost his empire, he donated the statue to the state of Oklahoma. On April 22, 1930, the Pioneer Woman Statue was dedicated in Ponca City.<sup>28</sup> The impressive bronze figure of a woman and her young son striding confidently toward the future towered above the thousands of people who attended the ceremony, including the governor of Oklahoma, William J. Holloway, and the noted Oklahoman, humorist Will Rogers. Marland made a contribution to the state during a time of extreme personal misfortune. Following the loss of his personal wealth, all that Marland had which he could contribute to his adopted state was himself; to that task he devoted the remainder of his life.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Ray Ginger, Age of Excess: The United States From 1877 to 1914 (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 19-34.

<sup>2</sup>John Joseph Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman: The Career of E. W. Marland (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-8.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-14.

<sup>5</sup>Oklahoma City Times, July 17, 1934, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., July 18, 1934, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1934, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup>Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 46-47.

<sup>9</sup>Oklahoma City Times, July 19, 1934, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1934, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 75-79.

<sup>13</sup>Oklahoma City Times, July 21, 1934, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Kay County, Oklahoma (Ponca City, Oklahoma: Kay County Gas Company, 1919), pp. 38-42.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 42-60.

<sup>18</sup>U. S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population, 1: 887.

<sup>19</sup>Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 150-151.

<sup>20</sup>Oklahoma City Times, July 25, 1934, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 152-160.

<sup>22</sup>Oklahoma City Times, August 4, 1934, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup>Marland told the story of his involvement with the bankers in a pamphlet issued during his campaign for Congress in 1932. See E. W. Marland, My Experience With The Money Trust (Enid, Oklahoma: Enid Press, 1932), pp. 6-14.

<sup>24</sup>Oklahoma City Times, July 30, 1934, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., August 1, 1934, p. 11.

<sup>26</sup>Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman, pp. 198-199.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 198-102.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 202-204.

## CHAPTER II

### INTERLUDE IN WASHINGTON

1932 was a year of decision for Americans. All across the land people who felt the effects of the economic depression wondered why they suffered. Poverty, sickness, hunger, and unemployment afflicted many Americans. More than 13,000,000 people were unemployed; with business in the grip of fear there was little hope of recovery. Families who depended on the several million unemployed people for support multiplied the tragic effects of the depression. As the lives of these people were altered by the depression, they searched for the reason for their plight. Many Americans placed blame for the condition of the country on the Republican administration of President Herbert Clark Hoover. Faced with inability to solve their problems, distressed people criticized Hoover for not solving them, but the president was hesitant about taking overt action to rectify the situation. Like many other Americans who had grown to maturity in an age of prosperity and industrial expansion, Hoover maintained that the American system of private enterprise and individual initiative would overcome the depression. Hasty action by the government to alleviate the economic ills of the country might compound the situation and further alter the system which had temporarily broken down.<sup>1</sup>

Most people did not fully understand the complex causes of the depression, and to many confused and hungry people the causes were

not as important as the solution. They realized that something had to be done to correct immediate problems such as hunger and unemployment. In 1932, after being denied the presidency for twelve years, the Democratic Party offered leadership through the nomination of Franklin Delano Roosevelt for the presidency. To restore the economy to stability, the Democrats fashioned a program which assigned to the federal government power and responsibility which was unprecedented in the history of the nation. According to the Democratic promise, economic difficulties on such an enormous scale could only be overcome by an equally enormous effort on the part of the national government. Roosevelt and his party in most instances had little idea about how they would solve specific problems, but they wanted to exhaust all efforts to do whatever was necessary. The prospect of positive action which might alleviate the distress of the nation led to a Democratic victory in the presidential election in November of 1932. The Democrats won enough seats in both houses of Congress to insure passage of Roosevelt's program.<sup>2</sup>

Ernest Marland was one of many Democrats who rode into office on the bandwagon of Roosevelt and the New Deal. Like many other people in the country, Marland had experienced several years of prosperity and optimism only to face extreme economic reversal in the late 1920's. Like others, he also looked for an explanation for his misfortune. Marland saw the malfunction of the system as the reason for his plight and that of his fellow Americans. He believed that the system had to be changed or controlled. Because that control could only be exerted efficiently by the government, he sought to use that avenue to bring about changes which would insure control and prevent the

reoccurrence of such a national disaster. The former oilman, popular despite the loss of his fortune, defeated two opponents in the Democratic primary by a total of 10,864 votes to their combined 9,610.<sup>3</sup> His next opponent for the congressional seat from the Eighth District was Republican Milton C. Garber of Enid. Garber, the incumbent, had served in that position for a decade. Marland based his campaign on the Democratic promise to restore the government to the people. He condemned the financial interests in the nation for taking control of the economic structure and ruining it. He warned the voters of the Eighth District that they had to support Roosevelt, the candidate who would take control from the moneyed interests and return it to the people.<sup>4</sup>

The issue in the election of 1932 was, Marland believed, "an age-old battle — the struggle between a small group with enormous power and millions oppressed by that power."<sup>5</sup> Marland exhorted the voters to use their political freedom and vote for the Democratic party so that they would not lose their economic freedom.<sup>6</sup> He urged the people of the northern plains to allow him to represent them in the fight against economic centralization. He relied heavily on his own bitter experience to convince voters of the threat posed by the big capitalists. He told his listeners that he lost his fortune because of the manipulations of the J. P. Morgan Company and warned them that the money trusts must not be allowed to control the government the way they controlled his company. The policies of the Republican administrations of the previous twelve years had allowed too much power to seep into the hands of the moneyed interests.<sup>7</sup> By restoring the regular economic order, Marland and his fellow Democrats were



going to "take the government out of the hands of big business"<sup>8</sup> which would then allow them to take the people's "business out of the hands of government."<sup>9</sup> The government was to be used to restore order, not to destroy the economic base of the country.

Garber was identified with the Republican policies of the 1920's which were blamed for the depression. The potential advantage that Garber had as an incumbent was nullified by this stigma and the probability of Roosevelt's election. Voters did not want to send a man to Congress who would work against the president.<sup>10</sup> The promise of the New Deal and Marland's personal popularity throughout the oil and wheat producing regions of the Eighth District helped him win the election. He received 51,404 votes to Garber's 31,677.<sup>11</sup> Marland's victory marked the first time that a Democrat had held the seat from the Eighth District.

In March of 1932 Marland joined the other members of the Seventy-third Congress, which was responsible for implementing President Roosevelt's pledge to give the nation a New Deal. The Democratic majority in Congress assured the adoption of the president's plans for the recovery of the nation. During the first session of Congress, in the "Hundred Days War," the president sent a barrage of proposals to the representatives of the people. These proposals dealt with many different problems, but all were designed to counteract the deficiencies in the economy. Virtually rubber-stamping Roosevelt's program, Congress enacted several major laws designed to deal with the emergency which confronted the country. Banks were closed until federal investigations assured depositors that the banks were solvent, thereby restoring public confidence in the financial structure of the

nation. Thousands of young men were given jobs in the Civilian Conservation Corps, which took them off the unemployment lines and put them to work improving the nation's natural resources. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was established to give governmental assistance to people who could not find work or who were unable to work. Farmers received the assistance of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which by providing national regulation of agricultural production sought to raise agricultural prices and help farmers achieve parity. The government aided people in refinancing their homes and in building new homes so that they would not be forced to join the masses of homeless people already roaming the land. In the National Industrial Recovery Act, New Dealers hoped to eliminate the problems in industry which had led to the depression. Industries were to draw up codes of fair conduct and competition which would restore balance to the economy and insure workers and employers of equitable treatment. Extensive appropriations provided for the employment of millions of people on public works projects. With these initial reforms, the administration hoped to counter the most adverse effects of the depression.<sup>12</sup>

The freshman legislator from the Eighth Congressional District of Oklahoma supported the main outline of the New Deal. Many of the problems faced by the nation as a whole were particularly acute in Oklahoma; Marland acquiesced in the whirl of rubber-stamping because he was acting directly in the interests of his constituents in virtually every action he took while in Congress.<sup>13</sup> He held reservations about such precipitous action on the part of the New Dealers, and he worried about the submissiveness of Congress, but the dire

emergency confronting the country led him to approve legislation which granted broad discretionary power to the executive branch and unprecedented power to the national government.<sup>14</sup> While Marland supported necessary measures which expanded governmental control of various sectors of the economy, he retained a strong faith in the worth of the individual and the spirit of rugged individualism in the United States in which he had matured. His personal ventures in business and his ultimate success in finding oil in Oklahoma were proof of the value he placed on individual effort. Marland wanted the government to help the people through the hardship of the depression but did not want it to destroy future incentive for success. His hesitancy with regard to governmental control was at least partially motivated by his desire to insure all Americans of the opportunity to succeed; extensive governmental control might hamper the initiative of the entrepreneur and leave chances for advancement solely in the hands of those who had already achieved material success.<sup>15</sup>

Marland supported the president on most issues, but given the responsibility, he would have given some aspects of the New Deal a varied flavor. He approved the administration's bill for the relief of farmers, which provided for reduction of acreage in order to raise prices, but did not believe that acreage reduction was the proper solution. Marland maintained that the adjustment bill would not have the desired effect of increasing farm income but would "increase the farmer's difficulties by giving him two bosses where he now has one,"<sup>16</sup> referring to bankers and the new bureaucrats responsible for implementing the act. The answer, according to Marland, lay in the inflation of currency to increase purchasing power.<sup>17</sup>

The former oilman's qualified acceptance of the New Deal was also reflected by his reaction to the National Industrial Recovery Act, part of which required the establishment of codes of fair conduct for industry, to be written by the members of each industry and approved by the president. Although Marland gave the act his tacit approval, he was concerned about the effectiveness of such codes. He voiced his fear most explicitly regarding the industry with which he was most familiar, the petroleum industry. The disparity in size and wealth of petroleum corporations led Marland to fear that the large conglomerates would dominate the writing of the codes to the detriment of the small or independent companies. He warned all oil producers to protect the interests of their companies by participating actively in the formulation of the codes. A company such as the Marland Oil Company which controlled refining, production, pipelines, and marketing could not be expected to write a code which would be fair to a company engaged in only one aspect, such as drilling or refining.<sup>18</sup>

The activity and interest of the fledgling representative from Ponca City while he was in Washington, D. C., reflected his personal interest in specific reforms. Through his own experience he was qualified to speak on several issues with authority. His previous career as the head of a large company allowed him to deal with problems inherent in industrial legislation and to recognize the effect such legislation would have on business and the economy. The man who climbed from wildcat driller to entrepreneur spoke out repeatedly on governmental regulation of the petroleum industry. The millionaire who had watched his company wrested from his grasp by financiers displayed an active interest in limiting the power of financial

institutions. While he rose to speak in Congress on several subjects, he also served on the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, a position in which the former prince of the oil industry could offer valuable insight because of his experience in interstate and international business negotiations.<sup>19</sup>

Marland's most active role was in the regulation of the petroleum industry. He introduced several bills which dealt with the marketing of oil.<sup>20</sup> In the depressed condition of the industry prices were low, and production was high. Marland maintained that the guiding hand of the government could provide the answer to the economic distress of oil producers. He saw a need for cooperation among producers and among the oil-producing states which would allocate proportionate shares of the market and keep all companies in business. Continual price wars and cut-throat competition for cheap oil threatened to destroy the individual producers and cause untold damage to the industry as a whole.<sup>21</sup>

The pressing necessity for cooperation among states and producers was made even more evident by the problem caused by the shipment of "hot oil," or oil produced and marketed in violation of governmental regulations or industrial codes. The restrictions placed on the majority of the petroleum companies by the national recovery program were nullified by the effect of the sale of illegally marketed oil. Cooperation had to be virtually unanimous in the industry for the regulatory guidelines to have the desired effect. Bootlegged oil kept prices low and destroyed the incentive for compliance with the law. Marland introduced a bill which provided governmental supervision of the shipment of oil by granting the Secretary of the Interior broad

powers to enforce regulatory laws. The Secretary could fix prices, hours, and wages as he saw the necessity to do so. Most important of the powers was that of determining the market demand for oil and gas and allocating on equitable proportions to the oil-producing states their share of the total market.<sup>22</sup> In this manner the government could determine how much oil was produced in a certain state and whether oil was produced in compliance with quotas. Gas or oil had to be certified as being produced in accordance with the act before it could be shipped out of the state. Fines were to be levied on individuals and corporations for violation of shipping rules, and excess production was to be taxed as a deterrent to glutting the market. Marland had the approval of the administration in drafting the bill, which was matched by a similar bill in the United States Senate. Neither of these bills passed because President Roosevelt substituted his own amendment to the Industrial Recovery Act which incorporated the basic provisions of Marland's bill.<sup>23</sup> The intervention of the federal government into the problem of illegally produced oil helped restore equitable production and the industry became virtually self-regulatory.<sup>24</sup>

Congressman Marland expressed concern about other aspects of the petroleum industry. He hoped to provide protection for independent producers who were forced by financial expediency to ship and market their oil through pipelines owned by large conglomerates. Unless the government strictly regulated the pipelines, Marland believed that small and independent producers would remain at the mercy of the larger, wealthier corporations whose monopoly would allow them to drive independents into bankruptcy. He believed that if the large

conglomerates were allowed to draw up the codes provided for by the Industrial Recovery Act, they would not provide protection for these smaller companies in the shipment of their oil.<sup>25</sup> His agitation on this subject, added to the influence of other congressmen and lobbyists, led to the adoption of a provision in the Industrial Recovery Act which gave President Roosevelt the power to institute proceedings against holding companies found guilty of monopolistic practices and to fix reasonable rates for the shipment of oil, thereby protecting the small producers against unfair practices by the large companies.<sup>26</sup>

Marland recognized that the United States was blessed with an abundance of petroleum; indeed, it seemed that there was too much oil to many who were trying to sell it on a depressed market. However, the former oilman realized that the future might reveal a shortage of the valuable natural resource. He wanted state governments to pass and enforce laws to insure the conservation of existing oil supplies. He believed that the federal government should assist in the enforcement of these laws. The overproduction in the industry threatened the closing of small wells in favor of larger, flush wells. The United States would someday need the product of the small wells, but if they were forced to close down because of competition, the nation would lose the oil. The small wells might be forgotten or might be too expensive to reopen at a later date. He asserted that the more numerous small wells would ultimately exceed production of the currently heavy producing wells and that to lose the benefit of these marginal wells would leave vast amounts of an irreplaceable natural resource wasted.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to his actions relating to the petroleum industry, Congressman Marland devoted his attention to reform of the financial structure of the nation. He gave his support to the Glass-Steagall Banking Act, which provided for the separation of commercial and investment banking and guaranteed bank deposits,<sup>28</sup> and the Truth-in-Securities Act, which required full financial disclosure when companies issued new securities.<sup>29</sup> He took advantage of his personal experience with the New York bankers to demonstrate to his colleagues the effect of the intermingling of commercial banking and investment banking. He had repeatedly said during his campaign that the money trust had to be broken, and he continued to attack the bankers. He sought to break their control on the financial and economic affairs of the nation by suggesting that it be made illegal for bankers to sit on the boards of directors of corporations. He warned his colleagues that they must resist the influence of bankers on the government because the government could become entangled by borrowing money from the major banking houses, thereby extending their influence even further.<sup>30</sup> He maintained that the government should not put itself at the mercy of the banking system in its search for methods to revitalize the economy.

Marland believed that the depression had occurred in part because banking and securities interests had extended their operations into too many other sectors of economic activity. The operation of companies and corporations became inextricably bound to the whims of bankers who had little knowledge of business, thereby constricting business activity. Marland wanted to insure that the financial operations of the money trust were subject to public disclosure, thereby



averting further disastrous secretive dealings which might disrupt the economy. During the industrial and financial distress of the early 1930's, his arguments found receptive listeners. Governmental regulation of financial activity became a major part of the New Deal because of the agitation of Marland and his colleagues.<sup>31</sup>

Congressman Marland became acutely aware of the hardships suffered by his fellow Oklahomans while he served in Congress. One of the major difficulties faced by people in the early years of the depression was a shortage of homes. The New Deal approached this problem along with all the others, and Marland believed he had at least a partial solution. He advocated governmental financing of subsistence homesteads to settle the thousands of homeless people who were roaming the highways and crowding the city streets. He maintained that if the aimless, unemployed wanderers were given a plot of land, a house, and provided with tools and seeds for planting that the country would benefit socially and financially because these people would no longer be on the relief rolls. He envisioned an idyllic life in which there was always shelter, employment, and food. He asserted that this back-to-the-land movement would also profit by the diversification of crops, reducing the reliance of farmers on a single cash crop.<sup>32</sup> Marland had provided such homes for his employees in Ponca City and believed that the federal government might follow his example, but the New Deal subsistence homesteads were not implemented on a grand scale such as he proposed. The federal government did attempt several isolated projects, but the idea did not gain wide acceptance.<sup>33</sup>

While he tried to reform the oil industry and financial activities of the nation, Marland joined other representatives from the Southwest in demanding effective flood control and public works projects. He suggested that Congress establish a separate authority, similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority, for the control of waterways in the basins of the Arkansas and Red Rivers.<sup>34</sup> This authority, as proposed by Marland, would provide control of floods, development of electric power, reforestation of land, and irrigation and terracing of farm lands in the watershed of the Arkansas River.<sup>35</sup> He maintained that the people of the area would benefit in myriad ways and that local or regional supervision of development would serve the people more efficiently than national supervision. The problems peculiar to each area could be dealt with by people familiar with the region. The program would be more effective if it were autonomous and not reliant on the whims and ignorance of federal administrators far removed from the project.<sup>36</sup>

While serving his constituents in the United States House of Representatives, Marland became familiar with the program of the president and approved of the things Roosevelt planned to do to bring about recovery of the economic system. Marland also became painfully aware of the problems which faced his fellow Oklahomans, who needed relief funds, jobs, housing, food, and, perhaps most importantly, hope for the future. He realized that the only way Oklahomans could recover from the depression was to cooperate with the national effort. A program implemented by the state government alone, financed by taxing an already overburdened economic base, could not provide adequate funds for the type of recovery operations

provided by the New Deal. Federal-state cooperation in financing and implementing reforms seemed to Marland the only answer. People who had suffered for years did not want to continue suffering while waiting for the elusive return to prosperity. Marland saw an appalling disparity between the productive capacity of his state and the pitiful condition of many of its inhabitants. He added his votes and recommendations concerning oil, banking, and the needs of his region to the general clamor for reform. As an inexperienced legislator, he had relatively minor personal power or influence in the Congress, but he initiated several bills and promoted discussion and consideration of these and other bills.

As he became increasingly familiar with the New Deal, Congressman Marland decided that he could serve the state of Oklahoma in a much more effective way. He determined that he would be better able to exert his personal influence as the chief executive of the state than as one of its representatives. The term of Governor William H. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray expired in January of 1935, and the office was open to a large field of aspirants because Murray was prohibited by the constitution of the state from succeeding himself. Governor Murray had personal animosity for President Roosevelt, as both sought the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1932. Murray subsequently became bitter toward Roosevelt and the New Deal.<sup>37</sup> Throughout the remainder of his term as governor, Murray opposed the New Deal and clashed with federal administrators concerning funds for relief, public works projects, and federal-state cooperation and responsibility. His mismanagement of relief funds and his questionable use of patronage eventually led the federal officials to take on the

responsibility for relief which they felt he could not administer properly.<sup>38</sup> Marland sought to replace this attitude of recalcitrance with one of cooperation and to bring the New Deal into Oklahoma by using the power of the governorship to implement a federal-state alliance.

In seeking the Democratic nomination for governor of Oklahoma, the adopted Sooner risked his political career. He gave up the opportunity to seek almost certain re-election as congressman, but he thought that the entire state needed his services.<sup>39</sup> His desire to see that Oklahoma participated fully in the national recovery plan encouraged his candidacy. In April of 1934 Marland described the reasons for his candidacy in a radio address to his fellow Oklahomans. He deplored the fact that the state had declined so far in the short twenty-seven years since statehood. He noted the distressing condition of a large portion of the state's population, particularly the appalling disparity between potential productivity and actual deprivation. He asserted that lack of planning explained the plight of the state. He pointed out that much of Oklahoma's wealth had gone to manufacturers and creditors from outside the state; in spite of the large productive capacity of Oklahoma's farms, nearly one-fourth of the families in the state had received some form of relief. Proper planning would correct this desperate situation, and that planning would come from "a student of economics and an experienced organizer of industry and an executive who can handle an organization."<sup>40</sup> With his administrative acumen, newly-acquired political wisdom, and strong faith in Roosevelt's guidance, Marland left the United States Congress on his campaign to bring the New Deal to Oklahoma.<sup>41</sup>

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>William E. Leuchtenberg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 2-4, 16-17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1933, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>Blackwell Morning Tribune, June 30, 1932, pp. 1, 6.

<sup>5</sup>Blackwell Sunday Tribune, October 16, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Blackwell Morning Tribune, June 30, 1932, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>E. W. Marland, My Experience With The Money Trust (Enid, Oklahoma: Enid Press, 1932), pp. 15-20.

<sup>8</sup>Blackwell Sunday Tribune, November 6, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Blackwell Morning Tribune, October 27, 1932, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1933, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup>Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Coming of the New Deal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), pp. 1-23.

<sup>13</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 2nd Sess., pp. 7080-7082.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 1st Sess., p. 5698.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 5698-5699.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 760.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 5699.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 372.

<sup>20</sup>Independent Petroleum Association of America Monthly IV, 4 (July, 1933), p. 5.

- <sup>21</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., p. 3809.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup>Independent Petroleum Association of America Monthly IV, 3 (June, 1933), p. 7.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., 9, (January, 1934), p. 5.
- <sup>25</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., p. 5699.
- <sup>26</sup>Independent Petroleum Association of America Monthly IV, 3 (June, 1933), p. 9.
- <sup>27</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., p. 3810.
- <sup>28</sup>Schlesinger, The Coming of the New Deal, p. 21.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 20.
- <sup>30</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 2932-2934.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 500.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., 2nd Sess., pp. 7080-7082.
- <sup>33</sup>U. S., Department of Agriculture, Toward Farm Security (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1941), pp. 51-58.
- <sup>34</sup>Tulsa Tribune, February 20, 1934, p. 3.
- <sup>35</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 133.
- <sup>36</sup>Tulsa Tribune, February 20, 1934, p. 3.
- <sup>37</sup>Keith L. Bryant, Jr., Alfalfa Bill Murray (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), p. 236.
- <sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 246-253.
- <sup>39</sup>Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 6111.
- <sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 6109.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NEW DEAL IMPLEMENTED AND IMPAIRED

In seeking the nomination of the Democratic Party for governor, Marland joined more than a dozen other contenders, including former governor Jack Walton, Speaker of the House Tom Anglin, and active Democrats J. Berry King and Gomer Smith. His most formidable opponent was Anglin, who had the support of retiring governor William H. Murray. Because the nomination of the Democratic Party was virtual assurance of election in the heavily Democratic state, the primary campaign of 1934 was waged in earnest among the aspirants. The most prominent issue was the acceptance of the New Deal. Murray's continual castigation of the president and his support of Anglin drew the lines of battle between supporters and opponents of the national program. Marland based his campaign on his record of support for Roosevelt, with his reputation as a strong New Dealer in Congress aiding his appeal. He left the management of his campaign to his staff of loyal advocates in the early stages because he had to complete his obligations in Washington. When he returned to Oklahoma, he and his efficient staff embarked on a campaign blitz, addressing crowds of voters all across the state, many days speaking before audiences in several towns. He continually stressed the themes of governmental planning, business-like administration of government, and federal-state cooperation. The most pressing and immediate

problem was unemployment, and Marland promised that he would give priority to that problem.<sup>1</sup> His shrewd campaigning and the promise of positive action vaulted him into the lead in the balloting in the primary in July of 1934.<sup>2</sup> He collected 156,885 votes to runner-up Anglin's 101,698.<sup>3</sup> With the remaining contenders far behind and no candidate with enough votes to capture the nomination, Marland and Anglin faced a run-off for the nomination. Another campaign proved unnecessary when Anglin withdrew his name from contention, stating that in the interests of the Democratic Party and the state he would accede Marland's victory. Anglin realized that a bitter run-off campaign would be disruptive to the unity of the party.<sup>4</sup>

With the nomination in hand and the office of governor beckoning, Marland turned his attention to the campaign against his Republican opponent, former United States Senator William B. Pine, and the Republican Party. Marland attacked Pine as an exponent of the "old deal" which had led the country to its present distress.<sup>5</sup> The state Democratic Convention incorporated Marland's plans into its platform, which included planks calling for cooperation with the president and for provisions for relief.<sup>6</sup> The general election was looked upon as a mere formality because of Democratic strength, but Pine and the Republicans took every opportunity to attack the New Deal.<sup>7</sup>

Marland officially opened his campaign in September and devoted his speeches to expounding the merits of the New Deal. He appealed to farmers and workers who had been helped by the New Deal to register their support by voting for Democrats. He admitted that some aspects of the New Deal needed correction but told his listeners to "ask yourself the simple question: Am I better or worse off than I was



last year?"<sup>8</sup> He emphasized the wealth of the state and deplored the fact that "after twenty-seven years of hard work, enterprise and careful living, we find ourselves hundreds of millions of dollars in debt. . . ." <sup>9</sup> He touched the problem of taxation and farm prices and said that the people could not pay their taxes unless they received equitable prices for their products. He was criticized by Republicans for addressing national instead of state issues but defended himself by saying "when I talk about getting the price of commodities up and the price of the dollar down, I'm talking about the most important state issue which confronts a suffering people."<sup>10</sup> Marland saw Oklahoma as a microcosm of the national situation and therefore he talked about national developments. His idea of providing subsistence homesteads would, he suggested, solve several problems. The unemployed could put idle natural resources to work building homes for the homeless and bolstering small farmers.<sup>11</sup>

Marland spoke of a new concept of the role of government, asserting that it was the duty of the government to provide work for those who were able and willing to work and to take care of those who were unable to work. Because all people were not needed in industry, public works projects had been established; he suggested that the people think of such work as honorable and useful.<sup>12</sup> He stated that Oklahoma had not done its share in the recovery effort by providing matching funds and promised that more would be done.<sup>13</sup> The combination of the promise of the New Deal and traditional Democratic voting gave Marland a convincing victory in November of 1934; he defeated Pine by a total of 365,992 votes to 243,341.<sup>14</sup>

Marland appointed voluntary committees to study the problems of the state government and to make recommendations to him. These committees studied various aspects of the structure of the government and the specific problem areas to be dealt with by Marland's administration. The governor-elect made frequent public announcements to the press to keep the people abreast of developments. He met with newly elected legislators at his home in Ponca City on several occasions to discuss prospects for cooperation in the new administration.<sup>15</sup> The assistance of the legislature was crucial to the success of the Marland program for recovery, and the governor-elect knew that he must convince the senators and representatives of the soundness of his proposals. The Democratic Party controlled both houses of the legislature for the impending legislative session of 1935, and shortly after the general election the Democratic caucus selected leaders for both houses.<sup>1</sup> Leon C. Phillips of Okemah was chosen as speaker of the house and Claud Briggs of Wilburton was chosen president pro tempore of the senate.<sup>16</sup> Early in January of 1935, shortly before taking office, Marland met with the leaders of the legislature at his home in Ponca City. Marland emphasized that they should give priority to appropriations for emergency relief. The major recipients of the relief funds would be elderly persons and people who were unable to work. The New Dealer sketched the outlines of his plan of action for the new session and asked for the solons' continued support in the days ahead.<sup>17</sup>

The new chief executive took the oath of office on January 14, 1935. In his inaugural address he told the people of Oklahoma that "the machinery of our government is antiquated. . . . The old order

of things is passing. A new order must be developed."<sup>18</sup> Although he maintained that the capitalistic system had broken down, he did not advocate eliminating it entirely; the profit motive and private enterprise had to be preserved. He suggested that the people join their government in attacking the evil parts of the system and in restoring America to the stature of previous years.<sup>19</sup> He reiterated his stand for cooperation with President Roosevelt in providing funds for relief and public works. He called attention to the fact that the federal government would no longer provide relief funds after February 1 for people able to work. Those people would be given employment on public works, but the state had to provide assistance for the old and the infirm. Marland warned the people of his state that they would soon have to pay more money in taxes to provide revenue for recovery activities but that they should bear this new tax burden cheerfully because their money was helping their less fortunate fellow men. He promised to make the distribution of taxation equitable so that no one sector of the economy would suffer more than any other sector.<sup>20</sup>

The next day the new governor presented his program to the joint session of the legislature. He advised the legislators of his preliminary efforts in planning, referring to the voluntary committees and his action in contracting with the Brookings Institution to report on the government and administration of Oklahoma. Marland wished to utilize these reports in future planning. Because the report of the Brookings Institution would not be completed until after the adjournment of the legislature, he advised the solons to consider revenue measures which would last only until the end of the next

fiscal year. After that time, the reports could be incorporated in an efficient attack on state problems. Marland repeated his concern about the problems of relief and unemployment.<sup>21</sup>

Governor Marland recommended the establishment and financial support of several boards to coordinate the activities of the state in its effort to counter the effects of the depression. Foremost among these proposed boards was a state planning board which would develop and coordinate plans for the effective use of the natural, agricultural, industrial, and human resources of the state. Another board was to deal with the problems of flood control, soil erosion, irrigation, and reforestation. To aid in the resettlement of homeless people and to help finance homes, Marland suggested the establishment of a housing board. To deal with the problem of famine in a land of abundance and unemployment in a land of vast natural wealth, he proposed a board to encourage and direct new industries in the state. Marland also requested a highway board and suggested that the members of the specific agencies be named ex-officio members of the state planning board. In this way all the problems of the state could be put into perspective and resources and money could be allocated accordingly. Marland requested appropriations of specific amounts for each of his proposals.<sup>22</sup>

Marland demonstrated his forethought and efficiency by suggesting emergency revenue measures to provide funds to implement his program. His suggestions included an increase in the tax on gasoline which would fund the operation of the highway board. A severance tax on crude petroleum and natural gas would provide revenue for the remaining four boards. To enhance the general revenue fund of the state

he proposed additional emergency taxes on personal incomes, rental incomes, inheritances, insurance premiums, cigarettes, and salaries.

✓ To raise revenue to meet the relief problem, he advocated a 3 percent tax on sales and services, with two-thirds of the money for relief and one-third for the support of the common schools. He concluded his message by urging the legislators to act promptly on the emergency measures "in the name of suffering humanity."<sup>23</sup>

Marland demonstrated in the early days of his administration that he had a plan of action for Oklahoma. He considered the needs of the state and wanted the government to attack these needs. His proposals for a "Little New Deal" proved that he wanted to follow Roosevelt's example. His plan was undoubtedly modeled after the New Deal because he had seen the success of the president's plan. Because the New Deal was based on federal-state cooperation, many of Marland's proposals were designed to dovetail with national programs already in operation. The governor had seen the methods employed successfully by the president while he was in Congress and sought to use the same approach. He relied heavily on the advice of experts such as the Brookings Institution and the voluntary committees and believed that the establishment of boards or commissions to deal with various aspects was the best and most efficient solution. This approach closely approximated Roosevelt's establishment of the "alphabetical agencies." It seemed that in bringing the New Deal to Oklahoma Marland had plagiarized from Roosevelt's book.

The resemblance with the national program was not complete. Unfortunately Marland did not experience the same success as had the president during his "100 Days" of whirlwind legislative approval.

The governor's program, particularly the monetary demands that it placed upon the state, brought heavy criticism. His proposals for raising revenue touched every economic interest in the state, thereby fulfilling his pledge to distribute taxes equitably; this also meant that opposition to the new taxes came from every economic interest in the state. Business interests and consumers opposed the increase of the sales tax,<sup>24</sup> and the oil industry did not welcome the prospect of heavier taxes on production of petroleum.<sup>25</sup> Marland had not anticipated the opposition to his program. He had been generous with his personal fortune which he had accumulated in the 1920's, and as governor he expected to be equally generous to the needy people of Oklahoma. His charitable spirit and generosity were not shared by all Oklahomans who were themselves suffering hard times and who did not believe that they could spare the additional money needed to fund the "Little New Deal." The concern of the taxpayers was reflected by their representatives in the legislature. The solons were hesitant in following Marland's expensive crusade without careful consideration of the consequences, both political and economic.<sup>26</sup>

Obstruction of his emergency measures in the legislature infuriated the new governor. At the end of the sixth week of the session, the only measure proposed by the governor which had passed both houses was a tax of three cents per pack on cigarettes. The governor, alarmed at the prospect of his program being blocked, appeared before a joint caucus and appealed to the legislators to consider his emergency proposals. He emphasized the necessity for the establishment of the boards he had recommended, particularly the planning board; he wanted to demonstrate to the federal government that Oklahoma was

willing to put forth a solid effort to solve its own problems and cooperate with the Roosevelt administration. The necessity for matching funds for relief and public works projects was a dominant factor in the governor's desire to develop a program for the state. With the aid of federal matching funds, the state could finance projects which it could not afford otherwise. Unless the state proved its willingness to uphold its share of the financial burden, many projects would be lost due to shortage of funds, and the people who were thus unemployed would have to rely on relief funds.<sup>27</sup>

The slow, deliberate pace of the legislature was caused primarily by the fiscal conservatism of the house. The leader of the conservative element in the house was the powerful speaker, Leon C. Phillips. The dynamic, red-haired, cigar-chewing legislator defended his opposition to the extensive appropriations by asserting that the legislature was merely following the will of the people. Referring to the governor's expensive program, Phillips stated that the house was fully prepared to provide for the care of the destitute citizens but was at the same time "conservative enough to save the state from the hallucinations of dreamers."<sup>28</sup> Phillips suggested funding only necessary budget items and then considering the governor's proposals if the state could pay for them. These necessary items, according to Phillips, included balancing the state budget, providing the necessary operating expenses of the state government, providing relief for unemployables, and supporting the schools.<sup>29</sup>

Marland's troubles with the legislature were not restricted to the house chamber. A conflict arose in the senate early in his administration. The point of contention was the confirmation of

gubernatorial appointees. Some members of the senate balked at rubber-stamping Marland's selections for state offices because they believed that the senators should have a prominent voice in the selection process. In this manner some of the distribution of patronage could be retained in the senate, thereby increasing the influence and prestige of that body and its members. The senators also complained that Governor Marland's selections were not equitably distributed throughout the state, because most of his initial appointments had been men from either Oklahoma or Kay counties with whom he was familiar.<sup>30</sup> Marland argued that appointments were the responsibility of the executive branch. The governor and the senators eventually reached an accord and the senate staunchly supported the governor for the remainder of the session.<sup>31</sup>

Marland demonstrated his continuing exasperation with the failure of the legislature to act on his proposals in early March of 1935 when he appealed directly to the people of the state through a state-wide radio broadcast. The governor spoke to his constituents about his program and about legislative obstruction. He reminded the people of the mandate he had received in the election to follow the recovery plan of President Roosevelt. He lambasted the members of the house of representatives for blocking his and, in effect, the president's program for helping Oklahoma. He praised the senate for its cooperation but charged that the members of the house were acting under the influence of special interest groups and tax dodgers who sought to "deprive their fellow citizens of any share of the state's great abundance."<sup>32</sup> He criticized the state press for its lack of concern for the suffering and for contributing to the apathy of the public.



The governor pleaded with his listeners to write their state representatives and demonstrate their support for Roosevelt, Marland, and the New Deal in Oklahoma.<sup>33</sup>

While the governor was admonishing the legislature for its failure to act, the relief problem created a crisis. The federal relief allotment was reduced by an administrative delay, and relief payments were reduced proportionately. This situation caused severe distress among unemployed and hungry people who depended on these funds for their existence. In McAlester a crowd of more than 300 people gathered at the Pittsburg County courthouse to protest the shortage of funds.<sup>34</sup> This group of dissidents claimed that they would remain at the courthouse until their demands for relief were met. Governor Marland hastily dispatched two truckloads of rations from the National Guard Commissary to feed the protesters.<sup>35</sup>

Realizing the political implications of the crisis, Marland pressured the house of representatives. Referring to the crisis in Pittsburg County, he publicly lamented that the bottleneck in the legislature was responsible because there were no funds at his disposal. Sending rations to feed hungry people, he continued, was the only option available. The legislature had passed a measure creating a state welfare board but had not appropriated the necessary funds for adequate relief. Because of administrative difficulties money for relief would not be available until April.<sup>36</sup> However, the hungry demonstrators wanted neither excuses nor temporary rations. The two truckloads of food were left untouched by the crowd. A committee of the dissidents met with Governor Marland in the capitol to explain the situation and to plead for assistance. The governor informed the

committee that he would be unable to help them unless the legislature approved his recovery board measures, and the committee remained in Oklahoma City to observe the legislature in action. Spurred into action by the hostile witnesses and the urgent crisis, the senate speedily approved a bill appropriating \$600,000 for emergency relief for the final two weeks of March. These funds were to be distributed by the federal relief administration, as the administrative facilities of the state were not yet in operation. While the previously recalcitrant house was considering increasing the appropriation to prove its willingness to help, the federal relief allotment was received and the issue was allowed to rest momentarily.<sup>37</sup> However, this crisis demonstrated the necessity for relief appropriations.

Despite Marland's persistent appeals, the opposition continued in the house of representatives, and his proposals emerged at the end of the session considerably altered. The legislature appropriated only \$2,500,000 for relief, one-half the sum proposed by the governor. The housing and new industries boards were killed in the house. The state planning board and the flood control and conservation board were both established but with accompanying appropriations which were only a fraction of the amount suggested by Marland. The sales tax remained at the previous rate of 1 percent, although it was expanded somewhat to include several services as well as gross sales. The one cent gasoline tax and the insurance premium tax also failed.<sup>38</sup>

The conservative faction did not completely destroy the governor's program. Parts of the plan were enacted despite the attrition in the legislature. Additional revenue for the state was provided by taxes on incomes, inheritances, cigarettes, and gross production of oil,

in addition to the modified sales tax. The state planning and flood control boards, although handicapped by limited funds, offered a system through which the state's problems could be studied and a plan of action proposed which would allow closer cooperation with the federal government in recovery activities. The legislature also appropriated \$8,200,000 yearly for the support of the common schools.<sup>39</sup> The governor had at least obtained partial fulfillment of his expectations and had partially succeeded in bringing the New Deal to Oklahoma. He had exerted himself repeatedly to get his program through in its entirety, but unexpected opposition diluted the force of the "Little New Deal."

Despite the relative successes, Marland remained dissatisfied with the portions of his suggestions that had survived the legislative trimming. In a speech before a banquet of the Comanche County League of Young Democrats on May 16, 1935, he renewed his attack on the legislature. He denounced Phillips and the other members of the house for their failure to implement the program that the voters had overwhelmingly approved the previous November. He told Oklahomans that they had been "cruelly betrayed by your own house of representatives."<sup>40</sup> He stated that if the people of Oklahoma did not want his program, he did not want the job of governor. Marland proposed to carry his fight for the New Deal to the voters by submitting some of the defeated measures to them in a special election. Accusing the representatives of not representing the true feelings of their constituents, he suggested that "the people must pass laws until representatives are elected in a year and a half."<sup>41</sup> He rejected the excuses offered by Phillips and the legislators who said that their

constituents did not want to pay for his scheme, telling his listeners that "you know you can't get something for nothing."<sup>42</sup> He called on the people of Oklahoma to strive with him toward the ultimate goal of economic and social security.<sup>43</sup>

Marland displayed his willingness to fight in his struggle to secure relief appropriations. He did not think that the revenue measures passed by the legislature were sufficient to meet the demands of the people and favored placing an initiative measure on the ballot for the election in September. The legislature had referred four issues to the voters before adjourning. The initiative measure favored by the governor was to provide for a commission for old age pensions and social security which would have powers to obtain revenues beyond those granted by the legislature. This petition was held up in court by hearings on the sufficiency of the signatures. The governor was not to be denied again; he issued an executive proclamation which placed the initiative measure on the ballot.<sup>44</sup> The measure was approved 204,626 votes to 78,783,<sup>45</sup> but this action was declared void in February of 1936 when the state supreme court ruled that the governor's autonomous action was unconstitutional.<sup>46</sup>

Marland also supported an initiative petition which appropriated \$2,500,000 for relief purposes. This was approved by the voters in a special election in December of 1935 by a vote of 82,462 to 45,079.<sup>47</sup> It was passed primarily by the votes of poverty-stricken people who, of course, had a vital personal interest in its passage. While this action won the support of many under-privileged Oklahomans and increased the governor's popularity as a humanitarian, it also caused unrest about his abuse of the governmental process.<sup>48</sup>

In addition to his strenuous efforts to spread the social benefits of the New Deal, Marland continued his active interest in the petroleum industry as governor of one of the major oil-producing states. The primary focus of his attention was the formation of an alliance among the states to regulate and conserve petroleum. He sponsored meetings at his home in Ponca City in December of 1934 and January of 1935 to discuss with other governors and governors-elect the possibility of a compact between the states to allow them to cooperate in the conservation of their valuable mineral wealth.<sup>49</sup> They agreed to reconvene in Dallas, Texas, in February of 1935 to draft such a compact. At the session in Dallas Marland was instrumental in securing the adoption of the Interstate Oil Compact by the representatives of the governments of Texas, Oklahoma, California, New Mexico, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, and Michigan. He stressed the need for conservation of oil and for the cooperation of the states in keeping small wells open. He stated that regulation could come either by federal assumption of responsibility or by the interstate compact plan. Through the latter the states could maintain their sovereignty and control of the oil resources would remain with the people who were familiar with the needs and problems of the industry. Marland asserted that by voluntarily assuming responsibility for conservation and wise use of natural resources, the states could avoid being forced to surrender control to the federal government and could actively correct the problems of the industry before conditions worsened.<sup>50</sup>

The Interstate Oil Compact was submitted to the several state legislatures for ratification and to Congress for approval. Congress passed a resolution of approval in August of 1935, and in September

the representatives of the states which had ratified the agreement met in Oklahoma City and formed the Interstate Compact Commission, consisting of one member from each oil-producing signatory state.<sup>51</sup> The establishment of this commission was a major step in the self-regulation of the industry.

Governor Marland's first year in office was an eventful one in which he encountered unexpected difficulty in achieving his goals. He displayed an uncharacteristic aggressiveness in his struggle to secure adoption of his New Deal for Oklahoma. He expressed disbelief that people might place concern for financial considerations above their desire to help their less fortunate fellow human beings and consequently blamed the state legislature for not reflecting the will of the people. He was fully convinced that the efficiency which he had applied to the administration of the state government would bring Oklahoma out of the throes of economic unrest. He applied business techniques of management to the operation of the executive department, but he knew that planning and organization meant little unless the rest of the state government cooperated with the executive branch and gave legal and financial sanction to his proposals. Marland was dismayed but not defeated. He sought to continue to exert his influence in state and national politics to bring about responsible, effective governmental solutions to the problems created by the depression.

FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Daily Oklahoman, July 1, 1934, p. 16A.
- <sup>2</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLIII, 1 (July 7, 1934), p. 6.
- <sup>3</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1935, p. 26.
- <sup>4</sup>Daily Oklahoman, July 6, 1934, p. 1.
- <sup>5</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLIII, 10 (September 15, 1934), p. 10.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-11.
- <sup>7</sup>Daily Oklahoman, November 7, 1934, p. 1.
- <sup>8</sup>Daily Ardmoreite, September 25, 1934, p. 3.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 7.
- <sup>10</sup>Stigler News Sentinel, October 11, 1934, p. 1.
- <sup>11</sup>Ada Evening News, October 26, 1934, p. 2.
- <sup>12</sup>Wagoner Record Democrat, October 4, 1934, p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., October 11, 1934, p. 3.
- <sup>14</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1935, p. 25.
- <sup>15</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLIII, 20 (December 1, 1934), p. 8.
- <sup>16</sup>Daily Oklahoman, November 13, 1934, p. 1.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid., January 6, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>18</sup>Inaugural Address of Governor E. W. Marland (Oklahoma City: Central Printing Company, 1935), p. 1.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-7.

- <sup>21</sup> Journal of the House of Representatives, 15th Leg., State of Oklahoma, 1935, I, pp. 237-240.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 241-243.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 243-245.
- <sup>24</sup> Daily Oklahoman, January 18, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., February 5, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., May 18, 1935, p. 2.
- <sup>27</sup> Harlow's Weekly XLIV, 7 (February 16, 1935), pp. 4-5.
- <sup>28</sup> Daily Oklahoman, February 15, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Harlow's Weekly XLIV, 4 (January 26, 1935), pp. 2-3.
- <sup>31</sup> Daily Oklahoman, February 3, 1935, p. 12A.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., March 9, 1935, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., March 11, 1935, p. 4.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., March 12, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., March 13, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., March 17, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>38</sup> Harlow's Weekly XLIV, 16 (May 4, 1935), pp. 4-5.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Daily Oklahoman, May 17, 1935, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., September 18, 1935, p. 1.
- <sup>45</sup> State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1939, p. 142.
- <sup>46</sup> Daily Oklahoman, February 19, 1936, p. 1.



<sup>47</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1939, p. 142.

<sup>48</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLV, 24 (December 21, 1935), pp. 3, 13-14.

<sup>49</sup>Oil and Gas Journal XXXIII, 34 (January 10, 1935), p. 37.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 40 (February 21, 1935), p. 72.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid. XXXIV, 15 (August 29, 1935), p. 25.

<sup>52</sup>Independent Petroleum Association of America Monthly VI, 3 (December, 1935), p. 23.

## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICS AND PARTIAL SUCCESS

Although Governor Marland had pledged to bring the New Deal to Oklahoma, he encountered unexpected opposition in 1935 from the conservatives in the legislature who were led by Leon Phillips. After he failed to gain complete legislative approval of the "Little New Deal," Marland decided to seek a new office, one which he could use to influence recovery at the national and state level. As governor, Marland submitted many proposals to the legislature but his ideas had been only partially accepted. The next session of the legislature was scheduled to convene in January of 1937. During the intervening time between sessions, Marland could implement little of his program except through the use of executive proclamations or special elections, which he used frequently. However, his personal ambition stirred him to find another means of helping the state.

Early in 1936 Marland announced his candidacy for the United States Senate. The term of the incumbent, Senator Thomas Pryor Gore, was to expire, and Marland sought to replace him. The governor based his candidacy on cooperation in the Senate with the Roosevelt administration. Senator Gore had opposed many New Deal measures and vowed to continue his opposition if re-elected. Taking advantage of the popular sentiment for Roosevelt and the New Deal, Marland entered the campaign to strengthen the president's support in the Senate.<sup>1</sup>

Two other candidates challenged Marland and Gore. Congressman Joshua Bryan Lee of Norman, an ardent New Dealer and effective public speaker, entered the campaign and took a position similar to Marland's. Lee promised to remove the anti-New Deal influence of Gore and to support President Roosevelt. The candidacy of Gomer Smith brought the issue of pensions for the elderly into the campaign. Smith was the national vice-president of the Townsend Plan Clubs, which advocated the enactment of monthly pensions for the elderly as a solution to the economic problems of the country.<sup>2</sup>

Marland and Lee, running on nearly identical platforms, spent little time campaigning against each other. Senator Gore was considered the front-runner in the campaign; therefore, the other candidates concentrated on capturing enough votes in the primary to win a place in the run-off election against the veteran statesman. The voters were to choose among one conservative anti-New Dealer and three liberals to fill the senatorial seat. Gomer Smith, running on the promise to provide pensions for the elderly, was too strongly identified with a single issue to win, but he had enough support to make the other candidates seriously consider the pension issue.<sup>3</sup>

Marland had an advantage over the other candidates with regard to pensions for the elderly, and the issue became a major part of his campaign. He had led the initiative campaign for pensions which culminated in the passage of a pension measure in September of 1935 in a special election. He had placed the pension measure on the ballot by proclamation, an action which was declared unconstitutional by the state supreme court in February of 1936.<sup>4</sup> With the voter-approved pension declared null and void because of his action, he promised

that the matter would surface again. The voters received another chance to enact pension legislation during the primary, a fact that was not overlooked by the governor; he hoped to attract a significant number of votes with the favorable identification he had received regarding pensions.<sup>5</sup>

Marland wanted the state to provide funds to match the federal pension payments, thereby providing a total of thirty dollars per month for each recipient. His energetic concern for pensions was based on his feud with the legislature. He justified his actions and his support for the plan by lambasting the recalcitrant legislature which had not provided for pensions in 1935.<sup>6</sup> The volatile conflict between the governor and the legislature was revived during the campaign. Senator Gore charged in his campaign speeches that Marland was using the issue of social security as a political instrument to enhance his image. Gore claimed that if Marland wanted pensions for Oklahomans, he could simply call the legislature into special session and have them enact legislation instead of committing himself to the initiative campaign. Marland retorted that the legislature had ample opportunity to provide pensions during the regular session but had not done so. He maintained that because the same legislators were still in office, they would not approve of pensions; therefore, the initiative was the best way for Oklahomans to insure themselves of social security.<sup>7</sup>

The pension proposal supported by Marland was a more conservative plan than that advocated by Gomer Smith and the supporters of the controversial Townsend Plan, which called for monthly pensions of \$200. The voters who were interested in pensions had much to gain

by the election of Smith if his plan was enacted, but his program was too radical in the eyes of government officials and therefore had little chance of becoming a reality. Because of the difference in the amount of financial responsibility to be assumed by the state government and the taxpayers, the matching plan proposed by Governor Marland and the New Deal was more appealing to the voters. It was also more politically pragmatic because of its more conservative structure. Marland's identification with this measure and his earlier efforts to secure social legislation gave him additional strength and helped him to take votes from Smith, but the governor did not rely on the isolated issue of pensions. He also developed his strong ties with the New Deal to widen his appeal to the voters.<sup>8</sup>

Governor Marland based his senatorial campaign on the same issues that had made his gubernatorial campaign successful. He wanted to help Oklahomans receive a fair share of national recovery appropriations and programs. The governor uncharacteristically criticized the national administration because he believed that Oklahoma had been slighted. The national government had reduced federal spending in the state and had caused delays in relief and public works activities. Marland's ire was raised also by the president's policy of non-intervention in the senatorial campaign. While it was politically wise for Roosevelt to abstain from endorsing particular candidates, his support would have aided each of them.<sup>9</sup> The president did not wish to antagonize the already uncooperative Senator Gore by campaigning against him, and he did not want to damage the candidacy of Congressman Lee, who pledged to continue supporting the New Deal. Roosevelt would not have endorsed the radical Smith in any case. While Marland

had been cooperative and vocal in support of the president's policies, Roosevelt could not afford to endorse him at the risk of antagonizing the Senator or the Congressman. Political implications therefore prevented Marland from gaining the president's valuable recognition.

The former businessman put his administrative ability and knack for planning to efficient use during the campaign. He had a well-organized staff headed by his friend and advisor, Howard Drake, who had managed Marland's gubernatorial campaign and had played a prominent role in recovery activities in the state. Marland made judicious use of the advantage he had on the employees of the state in gathering votes. His solicitation of support was accompanied by implications of loss of employment if he lost the senatorial race. His campaign organization was an efficient network of supporters and campaign workers who spread his propaganda throughout the state.<sup>10</sup>

The governor was plagued during the campaign by the recurring issue of repeal of prohibition. Repeal advocates in the state hoped to bring the question to a vote in July, and thus the volatile issue was injected into the campaign. Marland held that repeal was fine if the people of the state voted for it. He pointed out that the consumption of alcohol was already widespread in Oklahoma and referred to the failure of the "noble experiment" on the national level. Because of the activities of bootleggers, liquor was readily obtainable in the state despite laws to the contrary. The governor asserted that the state, not the bootleggers, should be receiving revenue from the sale and control of alcohol, but he expressed his dismay that the question had been brought into the campaign. He believed that it would draw the attention of the voters away from the important

political aspects of the senatorial race. To the governor the dominant issues were the continuation of the New Deal and the achievement of social security for Oklahomans. He feared that the furor about repeal would overshadow the political qualifications of the candidates, particularly himself because he was identified as a "wet," and adversely affect the outcome of the race.

Marland hoped for a boom in support in 1936 similar to that which swept him into the governor's mansion in 1934. He waged an intensive speaking tour of the state in the latter stages of the campaign, but the boom did not materialize. The election took a surprising turn, with the vote totals different than most observers expected: the two former congressmen won the top positions in the election. Whereas Senator Gore had been expected to be the front-runner, he came in a dismal fourth in the balloting and thus ended a long career. The personable, eloquent Joshua Lee had captured the hearts and votes of many people in the state by using effective campaign methods and had developed a groundswell of support which grew as the day of the election approached. Lee received 168,030 votes to Marland's 121,433. Gomer Smith was third with 119,585, and the elderly Senator Gore closed his last campaign with 91,581 votes.<sup>11</sup> With Smith and Gore eliminated from contention, the two leading contenders were placed in a run-off primary to be held on July 28.<sup>12</sup>

Despite Marland's efficient political machinery, his emphasis on the New Deal, and his advocacy of social security, he did not win the first primary. Because a majority of the voters had not cast their ballots in favor of any of the four contenders, he refused to concede defeat and continued his campaign on the issues of social security

and the New Deal, as did Lee. Marland openly courted the followers of the eliminated Gomer Smith, hoping to accumulate enough additional votes to win.<sup>13</sup> The initiative pension measure had passed in the election along with an increase in the sales tax to provide funds for the program.<sup>14</sup> Marland hoped that his connection with the plan would transfer the disappointed followers of Smith to the Marland column. The run-off campaign forced the voters to choose between a congressman and a governor, both New Dealers, for their representative in the United States Senate. The campaign became one of voter preference for one man or the other, with Lee's speaking ability a determining factor in the outcome.<sup>15</sup> Lee won the election with 301,141 votes to Marland's 186,885.<sup>16</sup>

Governor Marland appeared to have been the candidate most likely to appeal to a broad spectrum of voters. He stood adamantly for the popular New Deal and had done all in his power to help the state recover from the depression during his short time in office. He was a staunch advocate of social security for his fellow Oklahomans. He personally favored repeal of prohibition, but did not want the reaction to the issue to harm him politically; consequently, he did not come out strongly in favor of it. He felt that the depression was more important than the debate over consumption of alcohol. Marland was identified as a "wet," however, and Lee's image as an ardent prohibitionist gave him the votes of the "dry" advocates.<sup>17</sup> It is also probable that the voters, when faced with a choice between the two advocates of the New Deal, chose to maximize their benefits by retaining one man in the governor's mansion and sending one man to the chambers of the Senate. By this arrangement, Oklahoma could



benefit by the efforts of key men on both the state and national level. The primary vote and the run-off result, although a personal defeat for the governor, demonstrated the acceptance of the New Deal by Oklahomans.<sup>18</sup>

One of the criticisms voiced by the press and by Marland's opponents during and after the primary campaign was that he had used the administrative structure of the state for political purposes. Rumors surfaced throughout the campaign that employees of the state, particularly those in the executive branch, had been pressured into giving their support to Marland's candidacy.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Marland had closely linked his candidacy with the continuance of social security and relief benefits. Because the governor was responsible for many of the benefits, the implication, whether subtle or direct, was that their continuation hinged on his success. This political maneuvering created resentment which was reflected in Lee's victory.<sup>20</sup>

During Marland's senatorial campaign in 1936, he was confronted with a crisis involving the state government and the municipal government of Oklahoma City. The problem centered on the oil drilling activities in the city. On March 24, 1936, the voters of Oklahoma City approved an extension of drilling zones in the area north of the state capitol building. The state owned the land on which the capitol building was located, and this land was not included in the drilling zone.<sup>21</sup>

The difficulties arose because of the proximity of the new drilling sites to the state-owned land. As the city's land was approved for drilling and that of the state was not, wells which were sunk near the capitol complex would drain the oil and gas which lay underneath.

The former oilman, now in the governor's office, was well aware of the tremendous financial loss the state would suffer if its subterranean treasure was pumped out by adjacent wells. Marland believed that the state was entitled to the revenue produced by any underlying resources. The state would benefit by the sale of leases for drilling and royalties from the sale of the oil.<sup>22</sup>

Because the state's land was not included in the new drilling zones authorized by the election, Marland exercised his authority to allow drilling activities and tap the oil and gas from the state's property. He authorized the state board of affairs to ask for bids on oil and gas leases on state land.<sup>23</sup> By taking this action Marland was defying the city because the state capitol was within the city limits and the municipal government had not approved the drilling activities. The governor's action was technically illegal, and indignant city officials sought an injunction to prevent drilling on the capitol complex. The determined governor then declared martial law within the boundaries of the state capitol complex in Oklahoma City. To prevent municipal officials from interfering with drilling activities which already were taking place, he placed members of the state militia on patrol in the area.<sup>24</sup>

The governor was not attempting to usurp the power of the municipal government by this precipitous action; his motive was to protect the interests of the state. City officials did not question the right of ownership of the natural resources, only the autonomous action of the state in allowing drilling within the city limits. The city officials scheduled another election for the purpose of extending the zone of authorized drilling to include the capitol area, thereby

legalizing the action of the state.<sup>25</sup> The state's claim of sovereignty on its land was upheld in court, but Marland's action in declaring martial law was declared void. The crisis over, the city's suit was dismissed, the troops were withdrawn from the capitol grounds, and harmony was restored between city and state.<sup>26</sup> Marland was pleased with the outcome of the affair, because he planned to use the revenue from the production of the wells for the improvement of the capitol complex. He estimated that the state should receive \$2,000,000 during the first year of operation of the wells.<sup>27</sup>

Marland had the best interests of Oklahoma in mind in this confrontation between city and state. The state maintained control of the leases and received payments for the drilling rights and royalties. The revenue obtained by the state was used for such necessary projects as the construction of new office facilities. The governor demonstrated once again his interest in the welfare of all Oklahomans. Although his activities in this matter were not part of his senatorial campaign, he probably increased his stature in the eyes of his fellow citizens.

The political machinery for which the governor was criticized continued to operate even after his personal defeat in the primary. He directed his attention to the various legislative races in the state. He had encountered problems with the conservative members of the legislature who crippled his program and had warned the legislators that he would oppose them in 1936.<sup>28</sup> He devoted his personal effort and political influence to preventing the reoccurrence of a similar ordeal in the legislative session of 1937. The governor and his associates let it be known that they opposed the re-election

of the solons who had opposed the program of the administration and who had, according to Marland, betrayed the trust of their constituents.<sup>29</sup> A concerted effort was made to assure the election of a legislature sympathetic to the goals of the governor, and the foremost target was Leon C. Phillips, the former speaker of the house. The governor's supporters initially tried to defeat Phillips in his bid for re-election by naming their own candidate and propagandizing against Phillips.<sup>30</sup>

Despite their energetic efforts, the dynamic conservative was renominated and virtually assured of victory in November. With the return of his old nemesis imminent, the governor concentrated on diluting Phillips's conservative influence by preventing him from becoming speaker in the next session.<sup>31</sup> Marland's forces supported J. T. Daniel of Waurika for the position. Throughout the struggle for influence, the administration held the club of patronage over the heads of the members to gain support for the governor's plans.<sup>32</sup> The intimidation by the administration paid dividends. When the legislature caucused after the election in November of 1936, Daniel was elected speaker. The fiery, red-haired Phillips withdrew from the race when he realized the strength of the forces that Marland had marshalled against him. Although he surrendered in the face of the governor's power, he did not relinquish his strong stand against further unnecessary spending. He continued actively in the position of leader of the opposition.<sup>33</sup>

With a sympathetic legislature effectively organized, Marland decided to call it into special session. He had contemplated this action earlier but had hesitated because of his uncertainty about

the attitude of the legislators. He now identified several matters which he believed had to be dealt with as soon as possible.<sup>34</sup> When the session convened on November 24, 1936, the governor addressed both houses. He informed them that he would only submit a dozen matters for their consideration which could not be delayed until the regular session in January of 1937. He asked them to consider legislation concerning drought relief, tax exemption for homesteads, further relief appropriations, unemployment compensation, and the need for a state law enforcement agency.<sup>35</sup>

The absence of Phillips from the speaker's chair apparently removed many inhibitions about spending among the legislators. They approved a plan under which the state would cooperate with the federal government to provide unemployment insurance. Relief payments were continued with an appropriation of \$1,500,000 for distribution by the State Welfare Commission. The total appropriated for relief purposes, including free textbooks and provisions for medical care, was \$2,050,000. The legislature also approved tax exemption for homesteads. Many proposals such as those dealing with the federal Resettlement Administration and drought relief were delayed by legislative committees but were rescheduled for the regular session.<sup>36</sup>

The regular session convened on January 5, 1937, and heard the governor describe the condition of the state. Marland asserted that conditions had improved since he took office but that much of the improvement was superficial or artificial. He maintained that the real problem was still the system under which the state had operated since 1907. He called for a re-examination of the political and economic institutions which made the state unable to deal effectively

with its problems. The problems of a modern age could not be solved by using out-dated methods. Marland pointed out the disparity between the wealth of the state and the distressing conditions therein and blamed the situation on the failure of the old system. He recommended new approaches to the unique problems caused by the depression. Much of the distress, he maintained, had not been relieved because political leaders had been hesitant about taking unprecedented action with regard to social security. Marland asserted that the waste of human and natural resources which was still painfully evident necessitated the use of new tactics. For example, the governor asked his constituents to reconsider their attitudes about taxation. Much early opposition to his proposals had been motivated primarily by financial considerations. Taxpayers and their representatives had protested against the expenditure of millions of dollars for relief because the money had to come from those most able to pay. Marland gently chided the taxpayers for their selfishness. He suggested that they should not look upon taxes as a burden; rather, the knowledge that their money was being spent for the benefit of those less fortunate should be ample return for their investment. The governor asserted that part of the problem was that most people wanted to see a definite return for their tax dollars similar to the return on any investment. The man who had been so generous with his personal fortune assured them that "the masses of the people get more for their tax dollars than they receive for any other dollars they spend."<sup>37</sup>

Marland asked the legislators to make substantial appropriations, particularly relief funds, to meet the needs of the public, but he warned them that they should also enact sufficient revenue measures

to provide funds, thereby avoiding a deficit in the state's budget. He urged continued cooperation with the federal plan for recovery but warned that the state must assume its full share of the burden and not "sit back with folded hands and say 'Let Uncle Sam do it.'"<sup>38</sup> He closed by pledging his support and cooperation in finding adequate solutions to Oklahoma's problems.<sup>39</sup>

Ostensibly the stage was set for an effective crusade against the depression. The special session had allowed the legislators time to get acquainted and dispense with the opening formalities and difficulties of the regular session.<sup>40</sup> With the legislators organized and ready to work, the fulfillment of Marland's dream seemed at hand. The legislature, however, proceeded aimlessly and haphazardly along the road to recovery. The governor had not outlined a specific plan but had trusted the wisdom and judgement of the representatives. By not offering specific proposals he avoided the sniping at his plans which had occurred during the legislative session of 1935. He evidently assumed that with control of the house in the hands of men friendly to the administration, he would have his own "100 Days War." Without definite proposals from the governor, however, the legislators proceeded without unity or direction and concerned themselves with relatively minor and local problems.<sup>41</sup>

As the session progressed and little legislation of substance was enacted, the governor decided to assert his leadership and provide direction to the legislature. He urged legislators to postpone their consideration of bills concerning local or minor issues until the urgent needs of the state had been met. With this boost from the governor, they embarked on a spending spree unprecedented in the

history of the state. They appropriated \$6,000,000 for relief purposes, in addition to the more than \$2,000,000 provided by the special session. Pensions for the elderly received nearly \$20,000,000, state institutions more than \$19,000,000, and common schools more than \$25,000,000. Numerous additional appropriations provided for the regular operation of the state government. When the last gavel fell, the state was obligated to pay more than \$115,000,000. Oklahoma had finally adopted the tactics of the Roosevelt administration by attacking the state's problems regardless of the cost.<sup>42</sup>

As the solons completed their task, Governor Marland appeared before them and praised their accomplishment. He had achieved his goal of social security for Oklahomans, although at an enormous cost. It was, however, a qualified success. The legislators had appropriated freely for many programs but had not followed the governor's advice by providing sufficient revenue measures to prevent a deficit. They yielded to popular opposition by not increasing taxes enough to meet the state's financial obligations. Marland favored tax increases because of the purposes for which the revenue was to be used. Once again the conservative faction had held the line on taxation by its active opposition to revenue measures, but it had not stopped the excessive appropriations. The Sixteenth Legislature was branded with the responsibility for saddling the state with a deficit.<sup>43</sup>

With the termination of the legislative session, Governor Marland had his final opportunity to implement his New Deal. He had to take what he had been given by the legislature and work with it. Many of his original proposals had not been acted upon; nevertheless, his lobbying proved to be a positive influence in securing social



legislation for all Oklahomans. Moreover, Marland had been a prominent spokesman for those he identified as the common people. After the legislature adjourned, he was consigned merely to fulfilling the normal functions of the governorship, but he had plans for furthering his personal political ambition and continuing the New Deal for Oklahoma.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Monroe Lee Billington, Thomas P. Gore (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1967), pp. 175-178.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLV, 37 (March 21, 1936), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Daily Oklahoman, February 19, 1936, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1936, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVI, 44 (May 16, 1936), p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 43 (May 9, 1936), pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. XLV, 34 (February 29, 1936), p. 5.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 37 (March 21, 1936), p. 8.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. XLVI, 45 (May 23, 1936), pp. 6-7.

<sup>11</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1937, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup>Billington, Thomas P. Gore, p. 177.

<sup>13</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 1 (July 4-11, 1936), p. 15.

<sup>14</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1939, pp. 142-143.

<sup>15</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 4 (August 1, 1936), pp. 3-4.

<sup>16</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1937, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 2 (July 18, 1936), pp. 8-9.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 4 (August 1, 1936), pp. 3-4.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 3 (July 25, 1936), p. 9.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 4 (August 1, 1936), pp. 3-4.

- <sup>21</sup>L. G. E. Bignell, "Big Wells Spur Activity in New Oklahoma City Drilling Zone," Oil and Gas Journal XXXIV (April 2, 1936), pp. 9-10.
- <sup>22</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLV, 38 (March 28, 1936), p. 12.
- <sup>23</sup>Bignell, p. 9.
- <sup>24</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLV, 40 (April 11, 1936), pp. 4-5.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., 41 (April 18, 1936), p. 3.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., n. n. (April 25, 1936), p. 2.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., 41 (April 18, 1936), p. 4.
- <sup>28</sup>Daily Oklahoman, May 17, 1935, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>29</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVI, 49 (June 20, 1936), p. 9.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., 50 (June 27, 1936), p. 6.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid. XLVII, 5 (August 8, 1936), p. 5.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., 8 (August 29, 1936), p. 4.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., 18 (November 7, 1936), pp. 10-11.
- <sup>34</sup>Daily Oklahoman, November 15, 1936, p. 1.
- <sup>35</sup>Journal of the House of Representatives, 16th Leg., State of Oklahoma, 1937, pp. 14-18.
- <sup>36</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 26 (January 2, 1937), p. 9.
- <sup>37</sup>Journal of the House of Representatives, 16th Leg., State of Oklahoma, 1937, pp. 40-55.
- <sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 54-55.
- <sup>39</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 26 (January 2, 1937), p. 9.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid., 30 (January 30, 1937), p. 4.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., 46 (May 15, 1937), pp. 14-16.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

## CHAPTER V

### AMBITION UNFULFILLED

Late in 1937, Marland once again burst forth into the political arena. He announced that he would seek the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate. The seat was held by the veteran statesman Elmer Thomas of Lawton. Once again Marland faced an incumbent who was supported widely. This time, however, he faced an incumbent and a New Dealer in the same opponent. Thomas was popular and was close to the Roosevelt administration. Also in the race was Gomer Smith, a perennial candidate for public office. Although he faced formidable opposition, Marland knew that his term as governor was drawing to a close, and he had to seek another office from which to continue in his role as a reformer. He hoped to gain support by running on his favorable record as governor.<sup>1</sup>

Marland's candidacy received a serious jolt when the Oklahoma Public Welfare Commission, which he had helped to establish and with which he was closely identified in the public eye, became involved in a scandal. Federal investigations of alleged corruption in the administration of relief payments revealed that the rolls of the welfare commission contained the names of many who were ineligible for payments.<sup>2</sup> As the evidence of bureaucratic malfeasance mounted, the federal government took authority away from the state's welfare organization until its affairs were put in order.<sup>3</sup> Governor Marland

was not directly involved in the mismanagement of the pension rolls, but it had an adverse affect on his public image and his administration because of his connection with the establishment of welfare organizations in the state. The scandal and the public reaction gave critics of the New Deal another opportunity to bemoan the takeover of the state government by bureaucrats with good intentions but few qualifications.

The senatorial campaign of 1938 was given a special flavor by the announcement that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, on his travels through the southern states, would visit Oklahoma in July.<sup>4</sup> Interested political observers in the state speculated about the effect the president's visit would have on the various political races. Roosevelt's blessing on any of the candidates would be a tremendous boost in the eyes of the public. The senatorial primary contest presented a tense problem because Governor Marland, as a prominent Democrat and chief executive of the state, was expected to serve the ceremonial role of host to the visiting president. However, Senator Thomas was the candidate closest to the Roosevelt administration politically and was expected to be at the president's side throughout his stay in Oklahoma. With two prominent candidates for the United States Senate thus in his shadow, Roosevelt was placed in an awkward situation. He could not maintain a hands-off policy as he had done in 1936 because he would be in personal contact with the candidates, and the public would be waiting to see whether he endorsed anyone. He could not overtly endorse either candidate at the risk of embarrassing or alienating the other. Thomas had been a staunch supporter of Roosevelt in the Senate; Marland had been an

energetic spokesman for the New Deal since 1932 and was largely responsible for whatever success the president's programs had enjoyed in Oklahoma.<sup>5</sup>

President Roosevelt arrived in Oklahoma City on July 9, 1938, after making brief stops at a few smaller towns on his route. He and his entourage went to the fairgrounds to meet the public. The president delivered a short speech as listeners waited to see what he had to say about the political races in the state. On the platform with him were prominent dignitaries and public officials, including Governor Marland and Senator Thomas. In his speech the president talked in general terms about Oklahoma and the nation, making a subtle dig at former governor Murray with regard to the gubernatorial primary campaign. He judiciously avoided direct mention of the senatorial contest, although he mentioned Senator Thomas as an old friend. Governor Marland received mention by the president not for his diligent efforts to follow the path outlined by Roosevelt, but for his work in the area of oil conservation and regulation. The president also mentioned the progress made by public works in Oklahoma but gave no one specific credit.<sup>6</sup>

The lack of an endorsement by the president seemed to be a fatal blow to Marland's hopes, but he chose not look at the incident as a rebuff, preferring to claim that the president was neutral in his comments. Marland said afterward that Roosevelt had talked about "the future and the welfare of democracy, but he didn't put his arm around anybody."<sup>7</sup> The frustrating snub by the leader he had tried to emulate for the past four years had its effect in the election. Marland placed third in the balloting, garnering 115,625 votes to

Thomas's 252,550 and Gomer Smith's 190,774.<sup>8</sup> Marland's legislative defeats had hurt him; now his personal ambition was dealt a mortal blow.

To compound the tragedy of the personal defeat, Marland saw his program meet with disfavor in the election. His old nemesis Leon Phillips won the Democratic nomination for governor in the July primary. Phillips defeated his nearest opponent, W. S. Key, by a total of 179,139 votes to 176,034.<sup>9</sup> Key ran on a platform supporting the New Deal, and although it was by a small margin, his defeat demonstrated that the New Deal as implemented by Marland was losing favor with the people. The next highest vote total was the more than 148,000 garnered by anti-New Dealer and former governor William Murray. Phillips supported the New Deal as a Democrat, but was not as enthusiastic about federal intervention in the economy as Marland had been. In his campaign he capitalized on the spending of the Marland administration and the struggles regarding patronage. The victory by the conservative Phillips signalled a new movement toward retrenchment and economy in state government in Oklahoma.<sup>10</sup>

Marland left office in January of 1939 after addressing the legislature for the final time. He acceded defeat by telling the new members of the legislature that he would summarize the gains of his administration and would not recommend any future action, leaving that task to incoming governor Phillips. Marland recited in great detail the accomplishments of his term in office. He suggested that the program for social security passed during his term helped to retard human erosion as well as to conserve the resources of the state. He mentioned the welfare organizations which had been

established largely due to his influence, his work with the Interstate Oil Compact, and the efforts of the state to help all its people with improved prisons, schools, and asylums. He blamed the deficit which was then evident in the state budget on the nationwide recession which took place after the legislature had passed its appropriations and revenue bills. The outgoing governor stated that despite all that had been done, the condition of the state was still fundamentally bad. He told the solons that they had a heavy responsibility in trying to insure that their fellow men were adequately cared for in times of hardship.<sup>11</sup> He bid adieu to the legislators by reiterating what had become his creed while in office: "Government is not worthy of the name that does not devote itself to the solutions of the problems of labor and unemployment so vital to the general welfare."<sup>12</sup> He left for Ponca City after Phillips's inauguration, returning to private life after six strenuous years in public service.

Marland tried to establish another oil company, but the half-hearted effort met with failure. He was forced by financial necessity to abandon his palatial home and to move into a smaller house.<sup>13</sup> He endured periodic sickness but still retained enough of his ambition to seek public office once again. In 1940 he sought to regain his old seat in Congress. He challenged the incumbent, Phil Ferguson of Woodward, in the Democratic primary. He curtailed his campaigning because of his ill health, however, and was soundly defeated in the primary.<sup>14</sup> The man who had such boundless energy when he was pursuing fortunes or his dream of a humanitarian society maintained a low profile thereafter and remained at home. On October 3, 1941,



Ernest Whitworth Marland succumbed to a heart ailment in Ponca City, the town he had nurtured to maturity. His death was mourned throughout the state and nation by former business associates, political allies, political enemies, and people who had been rescued from the depths of despair by his efforts. Regardless of personal or political animosity, many Oklahomans were saddened by the passing of a man whose contributions to his adopted state had been legion.<sup>15</sup>

Many changes occurred in the United States in the sixty-seven years of Ernest Marland's life, a life that was symbolic of the change which occurred in the nation during that time. Born into a world of free enterprise and rugged individualism, his ambition led him into successful careers in the petroleum industry. He enjoyed the benefits of the American system without regard to the repercussions which might occur later. Marland lost his fortune and finally began to search for the flaws which allowed such a catastrophe to happen. Finding the answers in his own experience and those of other Americans, he realized that the problem might have been avoided with foresight on the part of the leaders of the nation, both political and economic. Marland believed that the most effective instrumentality for the exercise of planning and foresight was the government. His experience as a businessman and as a congressman led him to speculate that he could apply the same planning which worked on the national level to the problems of his adopted state of Oklahoma. This campaign for planning sounded logical and appealing to the people of Oklahoma who elected him governor.

Marland's solution of planning and cooperative effort seemed simple to him and others of similar persuasion, but many times they forgot

the realities of politics, economics, or even human nature. They realized where they wanted to go but did not know how to get there. The new goals, desirable as they might have been, had to be attained through old means. The New Deal as approved by the voters and envisioned by the governor had to go through the process of legislative approval. In the legislature the conflict between old and new ideas was exemplified. In the first encounter the old maintained control and prevented the new from achieving total victory. In the second encounter the new gained control but in its zeal did not temper its extravagance or look realistically at the necessities of political life. The failure of the legislature to balance the budget placed the brand of irrationality on the reformers. The actions of the New Dealers when they attained authority or responsibility added fuel to conservative criticism. Responsibility for bureaucratic malfeasance or incompetence was not attributable to any one person. The enormity of the social experiment was such that problems were inevitable. However, the mistakes of the social experimenters created a reaction to them and their ideas.

In his zeal to bring about the acceptance of the new idea of social responsibility, Marland had difficulty restraining himself. When he met with defeat in his initial efforts to bring in the new order, his frustration led him to seek every means at his disposal to circumvent the legislature which he believed had betrayed the people. His use of the initiative and his wielding of the patronage club were attempts to prevent success from slipping out of his grasp. These attempts at political manipulation served to solidify the opposition to him.

Marland's impatience and zeal created a reaction which led to retrenchment in the state government, but his effect was more extensive and long-reaching. Although his program was only partially successful, he saved thousands from possible starvation and gradually brought the state and national recovery programs closer. As Marland stated in his farewell message, even after all he had done there were still hundreds of thousands of Oklahomans in need of the government's aid. And in addition to his immediate accomplishments in the area of social legislation, Marland paved the way for the acceptance of responsibility by the government for the security of the people.

FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Harlow's Weekly XLVII, 18 (October 30, 1937), pp. 11-12.
- <sup>2</sup>Daily Oklahoman, February 24, 1938, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1938, p. 1.
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid., June 27, 1938, p. 8.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid., June 29, 1938, p. 1, July 3, 1938, p. 4A, July 9, 1938, pp. 4, 8.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., July 10, 1938, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 18A.
- <sup>8</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1939, p. 24.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 23.
- <sup>10</sup>Harlow's Weekly L, 13 (September 24, 1938), pp. 5-7.
- <sup>11</sup>Journal of the House of Representatives, 17th Leg., State of Oklahoma, 1939, pp. 37-56.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 56.
- <sup>13</sup>John Joseph Mathews, Life and Death of an Oilman: The Career of E. W. Marland (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), pp. 256-258.
- <sup>14</sup>State Election Board, Directory of the State of Oklahoma, 1941, p. 20.
- <sup>15</sup>Daily Oklahoman, October 6, 1941, pp. 1, 4.

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