

LR 9

March 18, 1971

are just rushing it through, I move to amend Senator Barnett's motion to set it for a day certain, next Monday. Then everybody in the state will have notice of it. Your mail won't continue beyond Monday, and after all, what could be more fair.

SPEAKER: Did I hear you...did you have an amendment, Senator Proud? Is there an amendment...

SENATOR PROUD: Yes, I move to amend it to a day certain, namely, next Monday, at the top of General File next Monday.

SPEAKER: All right. Is there a second to that motion? All right. Motion has been made to amend the Barnett motion to have LR 9 taken up ahead of General File a week from today. Now, Senator Chambers was first, then Senator Barnett.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I did all I could to try to prevent the thing from coming out here on the floor, but now that one shoe has dropped, I think we ought to go on and drop the other one today. I doubt that any Senator is going to do more research between now and Monday than he has already done. The public will not have the opportunity to participate in the debate. Perhaps, the galleries could be filled and on certain cues persuaded to give an appropriate demonstration when certain compromisers make certain statements but I would object to Senator Proud's amendment. I think we ought to move it to the top of General File and dispose of it now. If anybody is prepared, it's Senator Proud. I've watched him on television carrying volumes of books. He came before the Government Committee carrying volumes of books. He has spoken very learnedly on the issue even though I disagree with his conclusions and his premises but I think he is more prepared than anybody else to debate this issue. We should defeat his amendment and move this thing to General File, to the top, and dispose of it.

SPEAKER: Senator Barnett.

SENATOR BARNETT: Mr. President, members of the body, I think Senator Chambers said it very well. I think that the importance of this issue has been discussed, discussed and discussed, and now is the time to take care of it, so, therefore, I think my motion to take care of the issue today or whenever it should come up the head of General File is perfectly in order and should be done at this time.

SPEAKER: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, and members of the Legislature, the key argument in favor of taking it up at this time is that not one vote is going to be changed and the issue is already decided. We saw evidence a little while ago that at least 34 people were willing to discuss it, and so 34 votes somewhere were changed in the last year. The criticism that we are under for our action last year is that we rushed and didn't give it a fair chance, and yet we are slipping very gradually into that same trap today. Now that the issue is here and before us, we want to dispose of it in the next ten minutes. A Constitutional amendment lasts, probably, longer than any law that will ever be put on the books, so it seems a little foolish to have this crisis approach now that we have to resolve it in the next ten minutes. Senator Proud has suggested next Monday. This gives us a full week to study it ourselves to see if there is any chance for changing an opinion either in favor of or against. That seems to me totally reasonable and will remove the cloud that once again we are trying to do something by rushing it to achieve a certain purpose. I think the theory is that if we do it now that no votes can be changed, whereas many people are afraid if any additional time is given, Senator Proud may gain strength. If this Constitutional amendment isn't able to stand on its own two feet and face the light of day today or next week or next year, then we don't want it. I think it can face the light of day, whether it's next week or