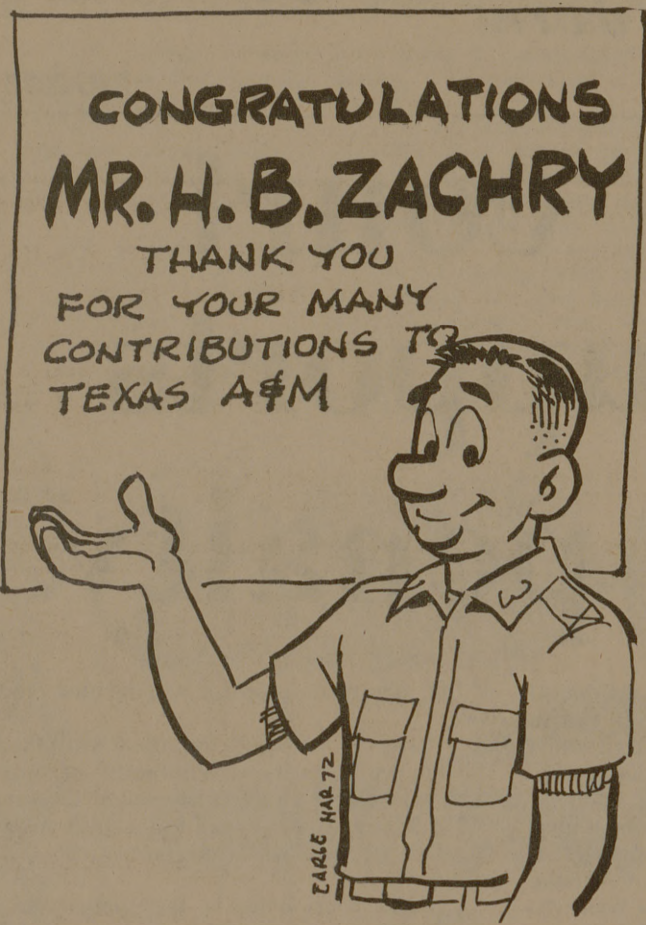


CADET SLOUCH by Jim Earle

Mutscher conviction bad for politicians



AUSTIN, Tex. (AP) — It was a bad day for Texas politicians seeking re-election when an Abilene jury convicted Speaker Gus Mutscher of conspiracy to accept a bribe.

"That jury decision just the same as makes anyone seeking re-election who voted for the banking bills a part of the conspiracy," said one Capitol Complex official — anonymous by request.

The banking deposit bills passed by the 1969 special legislative session, which were named in the Abilene charges, were approved by an overwhelming majority of the 31-member Senate and the 150-member house, then

Dixon is head of science group

Dr. James R. Dixon, professor of wildlife sciences at A&M, was elected president-elect of the Texas Academy of Science at the organization's 75th annual conference last weekend in San Marcos.

Dixon will assume the presidency of the state group next year. Dr. Clark Hubbs of UT-Austin is 1972 president.

Selected vice president of Section 1 was Dr. H. O. Hartley, director of the Institute of Statistics.

vetoes by Gov. Preston Smith after the State Finance Commission and others protested.

The conviction of Mutscher and his top legislative aides, Rep. Tommy Shannon of Fort Worth, and Rush McGinty, undoubtedly helped reform candidates in all legislative races who have been yelling "Throw the rascals out" in Austin.

A senator or representative who voted for the banking deposit bills, which were wanted by Houston banker Frank Sharp, is now on the losing side of the argument, according to the jury's verdict.

The Democratic governor's race may be affected most by the decision. Both Smith and Lt. Gov. Ben Barnes had been subpoenaed by the defense but did not have to appear.

Smith has claimed that it was the fault of the legislature — naming Barnes in particular — that approved the banking bills without proper consideration. He declared "the empire of Frank Sharp was brought to its knees" when the governor vetoed the bills.

Barnes has answered that it was Smith — not Barnes — who borrowed money from Sharp and made \$62,500 profit off insurance stock bought from Sharp's National Bankers Life Insurance Co. "I don't even know Mr. Sharp," Barnes says.

A prominent house member, and a friend of Mutscher, said Wednesday he thought Mutscher's conviction would hurt Smith the most. "The one countermove that Preston has now is the special session. I would not be surprised to see the governor open it up to anything. If the senate shows any sign of busting (not confirming) his appointments, they are going to find everything in their lap," he said.

And the jury decision that there actually was a legislative conspiracy to get the bills passed undoubtedly helped the two other Democratic candidates — Dolph

Briscoe, who was not in the legislature, and Mrs. Frances Farenthold, who spent most of the 1971 session fighting Mutscher, with frequent pot shots at Smith and Barnes.

Other politicians not directly associated with the trial likely will have their campaigns affected by the conviction.

One who will not be Rep. Bill Heatly, Paducah, who was not involved in the trial but has acknowledged that he also profited from stock bought from Sharp. Heatly has no opponent for re-election.

In the lieutenant governor's race William Hobby, Houston

newspaper executive, has pined out that three of his opponents — Sens. Wayne Combs, Ralph Hall and Joe Christensen — helped pass the banking bills through the Senate.

Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin seeking re-election, has been criticized sharply by one of his opponents, Houston attorney Hill, for Martin's relationship with Sharp. Hill has accused Martin of dragging his feet in investigating the Sharpstown affair.

In the state treasurer's race Jesse James, Democrat runner-up for re-election, has been criticized by his Republican opponent, Maurice Angly, Austin, because trial testimony showed several telephone calls between Sharp and James and because state funds were kept in Sharp's bank.

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Poor Gus

One of the most satisfying results of the conviction of Gus Mutscher is being able to call him a crook and deep in your heart you know you are right.

Of course Mutscher has proclaimed that the "big fish" are still swimming free. At the same time good ole' Gus has proclaimed his innocence. If we take this to mean that Gus was only a "little fish" in the scandal, how can he continue to proclaim his innocence?

Of course it went without saying that it was all political. After all, everybody knew those 12 Abilene citizens were out to get him.

Just to cheer him up, we think that he'll get a probated sentence. Hell, Preston Smith has to have someone to run the show up there. They can't trust any of the "Dirty 30" to do the job. Everyone knows that group of subversives is out to put all honest Americans in jail, political prisoners, no doubt.

The conviction has thrown the state of Texas in a frenzy to start renaming things. No more Gus Mutscher room in the Capitol building and, by the way, will it still be Gus Mutscher Boulevard in Brenham?

Oh, well. Where he's going, hopefully, they will give him his own private number.

AARGH!

...John R. Moffitt



The Battalion

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