
ELECTION OF CLARENCE W. WATSON AND WILLIAM E.
CHILTON AS SENATORS OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 11, 1913.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. DILLINGHAM, from the Committee on Privileges and Elections,
submitted the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Privileges and Elections, to whom was referred the petition of William E. Glasscock, William Seymour Edwards, Herschel C. Ogden, David B. Smith, and F. A. MacDonald, citizens of West Virginia, making certain charges and allegations of fraud and corruption connected with the nomination and election of Clarence W. Watson and William E. Chilton, as Senators of the United States from the State of West Virginia, report that a careful examination of the said petition and of all the papers submitted by the Senate to the committee discloses—

First. That the Legislature of West Virginia which convened on the 11th day of January, A. D. 1911, chose Messrs. Clarence W. Watson and William E. Chilton as Senators of the United States from the State of West Virginia, and that they appeared, took their oaths of office, and are now sitting as Senators in this body. The petitioners do not state or allege that in such election any individual member of the legislature was bribed to vote for either of the persons named or that in voting for them, or either of them, any member thereof was actuated by any corrupt or improper motive.

Second. It does not appear upon any of the papers before this committee that in such election any member of the Legislature of West Virginia was improperly approached by any person interested in the election of either of the said Senators, or that any improper offer or inducement of any kind or nature was made to any such member to cast his vote for said Senators, or either of them.

Third. The only direct charge that money was improperly used, or attempted to be used, by anyone is contained in a purported statement of L. J. Shock, a member of the West Virginia Legislature, that on the 18th day of January, 1911, prior to the caucus of the Democratic members of the legislature which was held to nominate party candidates for United States Senators, he was paid \$1,000. and

promised a further sum, to vote for Messrs. Watson and Chilton for United States Senators. This statement was read by Hon. George W. Bland, a State senator, before the joint assembly of the Legislature of West Virginia on the 25th day of January, 1911. But it affirmatively appears from the papers submitted to this committee that the charge made by Mr. Shock was without foundation, and has been fully retracted in a statement made by him to Senator Watson, of which the following is a copy:

BURNSVILLE, VA., *January 8, 1913.*

HON. C. W. WATSON, *Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SIR: The time has come when you should know the truth about the so-called Shock statement. I never have signed any statement that was read before the legislature and I never have been under oath. I have let the talking go on because I hated to be put in a wrong light. The truth is that I set up the whole business. Nobody tried to buy my vote and would not swear that they did. I wanted to nominate McGraw, and I thought if I got this thousand dollars and made this play it would hurt you and Chilton. The trick failed to work, and now you have the truth. I do not know you and am sending this to you because I want justice to be done. So far as I know, your election and Chilton's was honest and fair, and it is wrong to have this report going around.

Very truly, yours,

L. J. SHOCK.

Fourth. All other matters contained in the petition aforesaid are rumors without apparent foundation, statements of individual opinion, newspaper stories and speculations as to general conditions existing in and about the legislature, and throughout the State of West Virginia, just previous to and at the time of such election. These do not in any instance refer to the action of any particular member of the Legislature of West Virginia. They do not charge any act of bribery or attempted bribery. They neither name any member of that body as having received, nor as having been asked to receive, money for his vote, nor do they indicate any person who made any attempt to bribe or improperly influence any member of the legislature. They are of that general character too frequently indulged in both by individuals and by the public press on the occasion of elections in connection with which great public interest is aroused and, while calculated to arouse suspicion and create prejudice, they do not in the opinion of the committee present a proper basis for action on the part of the Senate.

The committee are unanimously of the opinion that the prayer of the petition should not be granted, and submit the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee on Privileges and Elections be discharged from further consideration of the subject.

