

# Separate Calls for Statehood Led to Turbulent Meeting

Two separate calls for statehood convention were issued late in 1895. One was sent out by advocates of the idea of combining Oklahoma and Indian territories into one state.

Another was sent out by supporters of the movement for immediate statehood for Oklahoma Territory, without reference to Indian Territory.

The calls set the same date and same time in the same meeting hall in Oklahoma City.

When the date for the convention arrived, as expected, a wrangle began as soon as the delegates assembled. Both calls were read and each of the rival factions elected a chairman.

Pandemonium broke loose. A newspaper correspondent described the scene as "resembling a riot in a lunatic



asylum."

The meeting broke up in disorder, but the delegates continued to wrangle until the lights were turned out in the auditorium.

This convention did not lead to definite conclusions, but it did seem to cause people to study the question of statehood seriously.

Advocates of single statehood pointed out that the area of Oklahoma Territory alone would make a state less than half the size of any adjoining state.

The other side argued that conditions in Indian Territory were so complicated and so radically different from Oklahoma Territory that union of the two territories would be both impractical and undesirable.

In counties near the geographical center of the state, including Guthrie and Oklahoma City, sentiment was strong for single statehood. Outside this area there seemed to be a preponderance of public opinion for separate statehood.