

Ex-Senator Robert L. Owen Honored On 90th Birthday

World Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3.—Robert L. Owen, who came to Washington as U. S. senator from Oklahoma in December, 1907, two months after the Sooner state joined the union, was honored today by the present congressional delegation as he entered his 90th year.

Among those present was Thomas P. Gore, who went to the senate with Owen. The men are the only living members of the senate of 1907.

In the private dining room of the speaker of the house of representatives, Oklahoma congressmen, their wives, and a few friends of Owen and Gore gathered at luncheon to praise Owen and to reminisce of the days when there were no radio, electric light or automobiles.

"Just as these came true," Owen said, "so will a universal language." Owen thus used the opportunity to plead for the cause to which he now devotes all his attention, a global language.

A large cake containing a single red candle which Owen later blew out, was brought into the room by three waiters as the guests sang, "Happy Birthday, Dear Senator."

Present also were the wives of Owen and Gore, the present senators from Oklahoma, Elmer Thomas, and Mrs. Thomas, Edward H. Moore, and former Sen. Josh Lee, member of the civil aeronautics board.

Among the major achievements of Owen was his work in guiding through the senate in 1912 a bill to create the federal reserve system. Sen. Carter Glass, then a member of the house, led its passage by the house. The bill was entitled the Owen-Glass bill.

"Senator Owen had his finger prints on all important legislation that was passed through the senate during the 18 years he was in office," Gore said in a brief tribute.

Owen served in the senate until 1925 when he declined to run because, he explained today, "I had some things I wanted to do." "He acted," Gore said, "his belief that the best way to kill time was to use it."

Speaking briefly, Owen pleaded for a world based on justice, friendship and love. He said that to beget nobleness in others, one must be noble himself.

"Just as hate begets hate, so love begets love, and nobility begets nobility," he said.

Owen listed material progress he had seen achieved as the development of the railway, hard-surface highway, telephone, telegraph, radio, phonograph, electric light, airplane. He said that the biggest enemy facing the world is ignorance.

To combat this, he said, was the aim of his "global language." A plan to achieve "one language in which



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all men could converse from one end of the world to the other. The accomplishment of this is my objective," Owen said.

The system, based partly on phonetics, has been developed for English and Spanish. It is being worked out for Russian, Chinese, German and other tongues, Owen said.

After a few hours study a person should be able to make himself understood in any language, Owen said.

Copies of the system for Chinese have been presented to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, through Gen. Patrick Hurley, Owen said. Premier Stalin soon will have a copy of the Russian version, Owen said.

Owen said he had given Gov. Robert Kerr a medal originally presented to his grandfather by Thomas Jefferson in 1809. Handed down to Owen, the medal is to be placed in the state museum by Kerr, Owen said, so that its code should become a way of life for Oklahomans.

The code lies in the encribed words, "peace and friendship."

Rep. Jed Johnson of sixth district, presided. Rep. Victor Wickersham of the seventh district arranged the luncheon. Attending were Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Wickersham; Rep. Ross Rizley of the eighth district and Mrs. Rizley; Rep. William

G. Stigler of the second district; Rep. Paul Stewart of the third district; Rep. Lyle H. Boren, of the fourth district; Rep. Mike Monroney of the fifth district; Royce H. Savage, U. S. district judge in Tulsa; Marie Moore Stewart, of Oklahoma City, with the Democratic national committee; Harvey Walker, professor of political science at Ohio State university, who said his father homesteaded in Oklahoma in 1904 and his grandfather before that; G. H. Woodward, who works with Owen's law office in Washington, formerly of Tulsa; Herbert Broughton a friend of Owen; Dr. Janet Meade, professor of languages at the University of Virginia; Lieut. E. W. Kingsbury; Miss Hazel Comstock, employe of the Reconstruction Finance corporation and chairman of the music committee of the Oklahoma State society.