

# THE FRONTIER

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Entered at the postoffice at O'Neill, Nebraska, as Second Class Matter.

One Year, in Nebraska \$2.00

One Year, outside Nebraska 2.25

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## THE NEBRASKA SCENE

By the Lowell Service

Lincoln—Supporters of the unicameral legislature succeeded in disturbing the complacency of the conservatives on the legislative council at the last meeting. For the first time in the history of the state, an issue was made of the theory of holding down legislative changes to the minimum. The council was informed that, at the next election, candidates would be expected to take their constituencies into their confidence concerning prospective legislation.

In 1939, legislators appeared with many bills that surprised the folks at home. Some of these measures had much to do with affairs far away.

"One of the most persistent and expensive of legislative fallacies," said a unicameral proponent, "is that a legislature must pass a lot of bills. This error arose from the fact that legislative bodies, in the early days, had to enact many statutes. Then the laws had to be amended and changed. This is not true in Nebraska now.

"Legislation for the 1941 session will be entirely curative, unless an attempt is made to make a revolutionary change in the policies of state government. Any such innovation or change should be discussed during the campaign. The people should be fully informed.

"At the next regular session of the legislature, there is no excuse for the introduction of more than a hundred bills."

With the war atmosphere engulfing personal political aspirations, the members of the council spent little time in oratory or bickering. Senator Mueller tried to get a legislative council investigation of the state assistance set up. He failed. The majority of the members insisted that his "problem was a local one" when he cited discrepancies in old age assistance payments and a reduction in the sums paid the needy in Buffalo county. The members pledged the intensive study and canvass of local opinion on the following:

Application of the principles of the Hatch bill to the political activity of Nebraska office holders.

Improving methods of procedure for the collection of taxes on personal property and delinquent taxes and tax foreclosures; consideration of new methods of assessment of personal and intangible property.

More perfect routine for preparing the biennial budget; standardizing the salaries and duties of state officers and employees and checking their expense and travel accounts; a study of the administra-

tion of the trust funds in charge of the Board of Educational Lands and Funds. (This action resulted from a report of conditions made exclusively in this column). Unification of the state's education system.

An improved system for handling claims against the state; a round-up of the cost of publications and determination of duties to prevent overlapping.

Clarification of the statutes imposing penalties for drunken drivers and revocation of licenses; study of the taxes on motor vehicles, with the idea of revision downwards.

Clerk Srb was requested to secure and compile information from the various states on trade barrier legislation.

The last legislature put a few teeth into the law prescribing publicity for money spent in promoting initiative and referendum petitions. Stiff penalties are prescribed for failure to report the contributors who put up the cash for the circulation of petitions and the subsequent campaigns for the adoption of proposals.

The form of petition must be submitted to the secretary of state for approval before the petitions may be circulated.

An amendment to the primary act, now in effect, requires that candidates for office, who leave their party moorings, must make declaration of the change in party affiliation ninety days before filing in the primary.

Another change that has not received publicity is the exaction of a \$10 filing fee for candidates for directors of public power districts. In 1938, filing fees for these places were not required.

The filing of the suit to invalidate the act of the last legislature which set aside \$50,000 for advertising the state's resources has revealed a rift in the ranks of the gasoline dealers. It seems that a group led by Vincent C. Haskell, attorney for the Nebraska Standard Oil Company, made a tentative agreement during the legislature to forgive previous diversions of gasoline inspection fees if the practice was discontinued in the future.

As stated exclusively in this column C. M. Sutherland of Lincoln rallied a group of independent dealers and started the legal attack on the statute. A survey is now being made to ascertain the sentiment for a constitutional amendment to prevent further diversion of gasoline money and require 90 per cent of the money raised from the taxation of auto fuels to be expended on the highways. The state advertising commission elected Keith Neville of North Platte, chairman. State Treasurer Havekost has been notified by the court to hold the appropriation in escrow until the suit is settled.

County Attorney Max Towle "cracked down" on the Midway gamblers during the last state fair, and \$850 was imposed on the concessionaires. In a statement, County Attorney Towle severely criticized the management. Secretary Perry Reed and W. B. Banning explained that passes had been cut down and that grousches resulted. Towle came back with ferocious criticism of the officials and their attitude toward law enforcement.

Charles Graff of Bancroft, when president of the state board of agriculture twenty-five years ago, rebuked some of the concessionaires and sought to clean up the midway. He continued his crusades through-

out the years. More than a year ago he resigned from the board, asserting that the character of some of the amusements had a degrading influence on youth.

County Attorney Towle declared that his action resulted from the complaints of the victims of the gambling games. Secretary Reed said that he had no intention of resigning. Mr. Banning is credited with a similar statement. Reed has been connected with the state fair board since 1900. Banning is also a veteran.

Despite war scare headlines, politics, national and state, had an inning at the convention of the Nebraska Federation of Labor at Lincoln last week.

Acting after an impassioned address by President Roy M. Brewer, of Grand Island, a resolution was passed opposing the re-election of Senator Edward R. Burke and endorsing President Roosevelt for a third term. Strengthening the neutrality laws and keeping the nation out of the European war were advocated.

According to one report, ex-Governor A. J. Weaver was in Lincoln and met a number of the labor leaders. Several prominent leaders were left for later consideration, when more candidates are in the running. The 1940 convention will be held at Scottsbluff.

Within the republican ranks, the effort of State Chairman Lyle Jackson to become national committeeman may develop into a major engagement. Discussions to promote harmony and agree on a candidate have been unavailing up to this time.

Considerable pressure is being applied to Kenneth Wherry of Pawnee City to induce him to enter the race against Jackson. As a counter move, the Jackson forces sought to have Wherry take the state chairmanship, and another group tried to interest him in the republican senatorial fight. Mr. Wherry, however, has announced that he is somewhat interested in the 1942 senatorial situation.

In the meantime, heat waves have hovered over the state headquarters in the Lincoln hotel. The historic location of the republican forces has been the Lindell, while the democrats have maintained headquarters at the Lincoln. Jackson has placed Ann Evans of Lincoln in the headquarters, and this has aroused some opposition.

John Quinn, live wire organizer, who directed the Heinke campaign, has a desk at republican headquarters in the Lincoln hotel is doing contact work among the young republicans. The party workers hope for victory in 1940; so the posts of national committeemen and state chairman are important from the standpoint of patronage. Friends of the Lindell hotel may make an effort to regain the republican headquarters.

Nebraska boosters are expressing disappointment over the awards

of contracts connected with the national defense movement. For almost two years, manufacturers have been attracted to the midwest as the proper location for certain activities. Cooperation from Nebraskans was lacking.

Several months ago, two tentative surveys were made for the location of an eight-lane toll-road highway through the state. The preliminary estimates were attractive, but Nebraska officials were unresponsive. It is now reported that the highway may be built from Chicago to Los Angeles, following a survey through southern Kansas. Several who have tried to bring national defense activities to the state are discouraged. Their failures will place the burden of relieving unemployment squarely on the WPA and the local authorities.

State Treasurer Havekost, in his most recent report, announced that the assets of the state government, including investments, amounted to \$20,877,045 September 1, as compared with \$20,483,934 at the end of the previous month. The state general fund overdraft however, increased slightly during the month of August. State gasoline tax funds amounting to \$1,134,004 have been distributed as follows: state road construction, \$566,977; county road construction \$327,380; state assistance \$218,283; and to dealers as refunds \$20,392.

The selection of a code revision group is now under consideration by members of the state Supreme court and officials of the Nebr. Bar association, in accordance with a law passed by the last legislature which provides for the revision and unification of the civil code of procedure. It seems likely that the Colorado plan will be followed. By its provisions, seven committees are named, and ten lawyers appointed on each committee. Expenses from bar associations are permitted, but there will be no salaries for committee members.

Nebraska will celebrate its Thanksgiving day November 30, instead of on November 23, as proclaimed by President Roosevelt, according to announcement by Governor R. L. Cochran. The governor stated that he thought that a change made on such short notice would create much unnecessary confusion, but that he believed that arrangement should be made in 1940 to have the national state holiday coincide in dates.

### WHY THE ENTHUSIASM?

Young Democrats meeting at Pittsburgh cheered the New Deal to the echo and expressed enthusiasm for a third term for President Roosevelt. True it is that the meetings were not so largely attended as hoped for, one afternoon meeting being estimated at 500, but this was no doubt in great part due to the discouraging phases of the Hatch law. But the meeting made up in enthusiasm what it may have lacked in numbers.

Some cynical persons may wonder why a meeting of young men and women should be so enthusiastic for the New Deal. For they may recall that the present administration has pushed the national debt from something like twenty billions up to forty-five billions and there are some pump priming enthusiasts who now say we could carry a debt load of sixty billions without blowing up.

None of the professors at Washington has yet told us how the debt is going to be paid. Yet nobody has denied that it must be paid in one way or another. If it is to be paid by taxes then the young men and women at Pittsburgh were certainly cheering out of turn. For the burden will not only be saddled on the shoulders of the young voters of the nation but fastened on their children and their children's children. Cheering for the New Deal, therefore, under the circumstances might seem to some observers a little like the man who is about to be executed, applauding the fellow who is about to spring the trap. If, on the other hand, the debt is to be cancelled by repudiation through inflation, then this means general ruin for young and old alike.

It must be true, therefore, that when the Young Democrats were cheering they were not thinking of a half a century of burdensome taxes. Nor were they contemplating the twelve million out of work. There must have been another inspiration for their enthusiasm. Could it be for prospective federal jobs? If so, then the youngsters knew what they were cheering about. Here is the bureaucratic record of the New Deal for five years expressed in terms of increasing the public payroll:

June, 1934	673,095
June, 1935	719,440
June, 1936	824,259
June, 1937	841,664
June, 1938	857,824
June, 1939	925,260

### W.C.T.U. Convention Held In Atkinson Thursday

The 30th annual convention of the Holt County W.C.T.U. was held in Atkinson, Thursday, September 14th in the Methodist church.

Delegates from O'Neill, Page, and Ewing were present. Doctor

Douglas, Mayor of Atkinson, gave an address of welcome which was highly appreciated by the W.C.T.U. ladies because of the frankness with which he spoke of the conditions existing at the present time and especially of the defective system used in controlling the liquor traffic. A rising vote of thanks was given the Doctor for his splendid advice and suggestions.

Mrs. Hattie Sylvester, who has been a state field worker and organizer in the state of Nebraska for the past 23 years, was present in the afternoon and conducted a round table conference, at which Hon. Frank Brady was present, prepared to answer all questions which might be asked, and everyone felt that he was very fair in his presentations and explanations of the problems under discussion.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: Mrs. Goldie Stauffer, of Page, president; Mrs. Mary Uttley, O'Neill, vice-president; Mrs. Elsie Johnson, O'Neill, recording secretary; Mrs. Lulu Dunn, Atkinson, treasurer; Mrs. Linnie Rutherford, Page, corresponding secretary.

Mrs. Sylvester gave the address of the evening and in her happy, inspiring way brought many lessons to the people present. During her stay in Holt county, Ewing W.C.T.U. was reorganized and are now busily engaged in a fight for laws that will better protect the youth of our nation.

### Lutheran Church Notes

Regular Lutheran service at the Episcopal church Sunday afternoon at 2.

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THE FRONTIER

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