

Prairieland Talk . . .

Hold Your Fire on Special Session

By ROMAIN SAUNDERS, Retired, Former Frontier Editor

LINCOLN—The governor and the state senators have had their share of punishment from Nebraska patriots over the lamented special session. Why not hold your fire and wait and see what the ultimate results will be, which cannot be harvested in a minute? Governor Crosby was reluctant to call a special session and many of the members of the legislature were unfavorable to such a step but the high pressure artists got busy and whether the results of this are to be desirable fruitage remains to be seen.



Romaine Saunders

If ever the tax program is satisfactory to all taxpayers there will need to be a change in human nature.

As an organized commonwealth Nebraska has reached the venerable age of 100. It was in 1854 Nebraska and Kansas were organized as territories, Nebraska being admitted to the Union as a state in 1867. The homestead act of 1862 brought home seekers from beyond the Mississippi and in 1867 the Union Pacific railroad was completed across the state, large grants of land adjacent to the rightofway being made to the railroad. Some of these lands were still for sale to settlers with the opening of the 20th century. Stephen A. Douglas did more than any other national figure in promulgating the organization of the "Indian country" so as to provide homes for settlers. Douglas had faith in the West. As early as 1850 he made a speech on the floor of the senate in which he said "there is a power in this nation greater than either the North or the South—a growing, increasing, swelling power, that will be able to speak the law to this nation, and to execute the law as spoken. That power is the country known as the great West." Whether Mr. Douglas had visions of a "growing, increasing, swelling" political power out this way or the power to sway the multitudes in a good beef-steak and other products found in the nation's bread basket, is not for us to say; but he was something of a prophet as well as a great statesman.

Twenty-two years ago the late R. R. Dickson, then district judge, went to about everybody in the community who he thought had a faint shadow of literary talent and flattered them by asking that they submit something for a plaque in memory of Holt county pioneers to be hung on a wall of the hallway entrance of the new courthouse. What was thus garnered, the judge submitted to the English teacher at St. Mary's academy, who sifted out all but two tributes that appealed to her, and these were submitted to Judge Dickson. He had them arranged in an appropriate setting and you may see this combined classic in memory of our pioneers as you enter the courthouse. The author of a part of this tribute, with Judge Dickson, now rests in a grave up on the hill, while his collaborator still carries on.

The soft flutter of 98 million of those slips of paper printed in green and blue and black, bearing the signature of Ivy Baker Priest in the left hand corner of one side of a dollar bill must be admitted to be something of a lure. That is the allotment of federal funds north Nebraska communities are fishing for so they can ditch the country to divert the uncertain flow of water in the Niobrara river, maybe to wet another hill of corn. In 70 years there has been one complete crop failure in the region and one partial shortage of fruits of the land. If you would rather raise an ear of corn than a calf and must irrigate, put down a well, but spoil no more of Nebraska grass lands by ditches that will prove to be more or less of a myth. The farm family that can't survive a crop failure once in a generation should go to town. Towns, not farms, have visions of that 98 million.

A calm spring day in 1901 Zeb Warner came to town from his ranch up northwest with six slick range steers and sold them to a local buyer for \$50 each. Zeb's cattle sale received a writeup in these columns at that time—probably because he came in and left a little bite off of that three hundred with the editor. . . A. B. Newell brought from Omaha that spring the first Shetland ponies to be seen on the streets of O'Neill, a pair of spotted little beauties, and a four-wheel outfit to hitch them to. . . And in those good old days Sanford Dodge, with his company of stage performers, would spend a week in town and delight such dramatic critics as Tom Golden, John Harmon, Mrs. W. T. Evans, Anna Lowrie and others when they took over the rink for the season, filling it each night with disciples of theatrical culture to witness "Macbeth," "Julius Caesar" and other Shakespeare plays. . . Mrs. O. F. Brockway, who as a little child, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Gwin, played in the street and in the back yard of the family home just to the south of The Frontier office, died of quick consumption at her home in Laurel in early April of that year.

The bigwigs have their childish moments. Wrangling over a photograph down there in Washington, D.C. What's the difference how many were caught by the camera—the two principals are shown standing together. Kid stuff, like two 10-year-olds each claiming it. If that is the measure of the high calling of some government servants Secretary Stevens should resign and the senate committee disband and its members go home.

There are 118 blind men and women in Lincoln, while Omaha has 400 of the sightless, and in the entire state there are more than 2,500 deprived of the blessing of vision. Lincoln has a Braille club and also a publishing house providing literature printed in braille for the blind. The Nebraska library commission at the statehouse also provides for the blind, having a room on the first floor where are kept records that are loaned to the blind and also the instrument which to play them. Only about 20 percent of the state's blind have jobs from which they draw pay, but many of them make articles to sell, such as leather belts, coin purses and bags. Some in Lincoln weave doormats and get about the residence sections offering these for sale. One blind man informs me that he and his wife, both blind, make about two dollars a day profit on the wares that they make and take out to sell. They all carry white walking sticks but very few have seeing eye dogs.

When it had begun to look serious for prairieland farmers because of lack of moisture, conference officials of a church group representing the five states of Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado whose headquarters are in Lincoln, appointed a day of fasting and prayer for all their churches within their jurisdiction to pray for rain. Rains have since soaked the country. Let conservationists and agricultural busybodies take notice.

Glass fronts to various things here and there are reported to mysteriously crack up. Now a householder tells of his TV glass breaking. Nothing mysterious about that, but let's call in the experts to explain the others.

There have been 13 army posts or forts in Nebraska, all now a memory. The last to be discontinued was Ft. Robinson which came to its end in Sioux County in 1948. Ft. Omaha was abandoned in 1947 and Ft. Niobrara in 1906. Randall was on the line dividing us from South Dakota and came to an end as a fort in 1892. The Dakotas had a number of army posts dating back into the 1850's with soldiers keeping an eye on the restless Sioux.

When You and I Were Young . . .

Harnish Searches for Homestead Tract

Takes Leave from Official Duties

50 Years Ago
E. P. Hicks departed for Springfield, Mo., to visit his daughter, Mrs. J. H. Deyarman. . . Jess, Glen and Della Benson attended the dance held at the Phoenix school. 'Twas a success even though few were able to attend due to the unseasonable weather. . . R. B. Skinner, former stenographer for Judge Kinkaid and now of Norfolk, was in O'Neill visiting friends for several days. . . The Misses Grayce and Maggie Joyce left for Wayne to enroll in the normal school. . . Deputy County Clerk J. C. Harnish has taken a vacation from his official duties and is making a tour of the county looking for a section of land on which to homestead.

20 Years Ago
The spring opening of the O'Neill Country club will be celebrated with a dancing party at the club house. . . O'Neill lost to Redbird in the opening game of the Holt county baseball league. . . Mrs. P. B. Harty entertained at the Grand, honoring Mrs. F. H. Butts of Nebraska City. . . A factory representative of the Ford Motor company's service school arrived in O'Neill to hold a school of instruction at the Ford garage. He had a sedan delivery arranged with full equipment for the servicing of the new V-8 Ford cars and trucks.

10 Years Ago
Capt. Catherine Ullom assumed the duties of chief nurse at Camp Butler, N.C. Prior to her arrival at Camp Butler's station hospital, she was assistant chief nurse at Kennedy General hospital, Memphis, Tenn. . . Dorothy Valla of Salt Lake City, Utah, is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Valla, and other relatives and friends. . . The fifth war loan drive is scheduled to sweep the country in June. Nebraska bankers have volunteered their services without cost to the government. . . Mr. and Mrs. John Tenborg and family of St. Louis, Mo., visited at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Tenborg, in Emmet.

One Year Ago
"The Big Show" thrilled an audience of over one thousand persons. The O'Neill public school kindergarten pupils provided a rare treat for the audience when they brought "the circus" to town. . . L. D. Putnam and E. C. Weller returned from an extended tour of Iowa, Missouri and eastern Nebraska where they contacted cattle feeders. . . John Berigan, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Berigan, was honored for outstanding musicianship and service at the University of Nebraska. He is one of five university ROTC symphonic band members awarded gold keys. A tornado at Hebron caused damage estimated at 2-million-dollars.

Food sale Saturday, May 15, at Shelhamers Super Market from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Sponsored by St. Patrick's Altar society. 2c



Weds at Harrold, S.D.

Miss Catherine Marie Garrity (above), daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Garrity of Harrold, S.D., became the bride of Robert D. Pfeil, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Pfeil of Harrold, in a 10 a.m. ceremony Tuesday, April 27, at Harrold. Thomas Blake of O'Neill attended the bridegroom. The couple visited O'Neill on their wedding trip.—O'Neill Photo Co.

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Ewing Livestock Market

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Returns from Alaska—
LYNCH—Reggie Pinkerman, who has been stationed in Alaska, is home for a 30-day leave with his parents, the Veldon Pinkermans.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFER
WD—F J Gilg to Lewis F Coker & wf 3-24-54 \$600. So 25 ft of Lot 9 & North 35 ft lot 10-Gilg & Swenson's Subdivision-O'Neill

NOTICE

The Holt County Board of Equalization will meet on May 17th, 1954, at 10:00 A.M., in the Supervisors' Office at the Court House in O'Neill, Nebraska. They will be in session not less than three days, nor more than forty (40) days.

All complaints or protests on valuations or assessments must be made during this period.

Ruth Hoffman Baker
County Clerk

YOU are a Shareholder in Nebraska Racing

Nebraska is different from the other twenty-five states with legalized racing. Different because here everyone shares in the proceeds instead of a few individuals or group of individuals. That's the law—racing is kept the wonderful sport it was intended to be.

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8 races daily 8

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Except Thurs., May 20, Post Time 2 P.M.
NO CHILDREN ADMITTED

Editorial . . .

'Good Old Charlie'

It gives you cold shivers to see the fellow run out from a liquor store waving a pint at his companions in the car who have the mix already uncapped and ready for spiking. And as he guns way from the curb and heads out of town, you can't help wondering if another highway traffic statistic isn't in the making. And in Nebraska the highway death toll already is unprecedented.

Drunken driving is to blame for more accidents than we will ever know because there is a lot of "cover up" on too many accidents. After a crash, well meaning friends, and even law enforcement officers have been known to pick up the half empty bottle and give it a furtive heave into the nearest clump of weeds.

If a person wants to drink that is his own personal business. But if he wants to drink and drive then it moves out of the realm of his business and becomes very much the business of society.

Fining the drunken driver isn't the answer to solving the traffic problems. So says Dr. Selden D. Bacon, director of Yale university studies on alcoholism.

Bacon, one of the nation's foremost authorities on alcoholism, says a 30-day mandatory jail term followed by a suspension of driver's license for at least six months is the answer.

"Enforcement of such a law would have to be rigid, impartial, and beyond the possibility of personal or political pressure to mitigate sentences," he said.

That moves into the realm of the almost impossible—a condition that we might attain in the millenium. After a drunken driving arrest, whether there has been an accident or not, everybody rallies 'round on a fraternal basis to keep the violator from being convicted—and if he is convicted there often is an effort to keep his name out of the newspapers.

If there has been an accident, fatal or not, the victim is soon forgotten. Everybody's attention is focused on "good old Charlie who wouldn't hurt a fly." Nicest guy in the world sober but he wandered down the highway, dead drunk at the wheel of his car, and an innocent housewife minding her own business and keeping to her own side of the road, was killed in the collision. You read of few such drivers being charged with motor vehicle homicide.

In Nebraska the revocation of a driver's license can mean a period of many months without the authority to operate a motor vehicle.

The right to drive is the power to kill. Until we take a more impersonal, cold blooded, atti-

tude toward the drunken driver the highway slaughter will keep right on climbing to new records and innocent people will continue to be killed.

Your Vote Is Needed

Your vote "for" the proposed new elementary school building on the O'Neill public school campus will cost nobody very much and will relieve a difficult situation for school authorities. O'Neill voters will go to the polls next Tuesday, May 18. It's a question of an 80-thousand-dollar bond issue.

School Supt. D. E. Nelson and members of the members of the board of education have carefully and conservatively laid sound plans for a new addition to the school system.

We sincerely hope O'Neill voters will give the proposition overwhelming support at the polls.

We heard a story the other day about a drunk driver negotiating his way at night on U.S. highway 30 from Grand Island, where he had been bowling, to Columbus, his hometown. A few miles from Columbus he pulled into the well-lighted state highway patrol's weighing scales, which was attended by patrolmen. The inebriate, thinking it was a drive-in cafe, ordered a hamburger and a cup of coffee. Instead he drew rations for 10 days at the county jail.

Ye olde editor says you can go ahead and plant your garden now.

THE FRONTIER

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