

THE FRONTIER

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NEBRASKA NEWS OF STATE AFFAIRS

By James R. Lowell

The fiftieth session and the last two-house body of the Nebraska legislature officially took the center of the political stage New Year's day when Lieutenant Governor Walt Jurgensen called the senate to order at noon, while Secretary of State Harry Swanson did the same for the house, yielding the gavel to a temporary speaker elected soon thereafter.

After organization of the two branches and swearing in of the members collectively by the chief justice of the supreme court, adjournment was taken for the day. Reconvening Wednesday, a joint session was held to canvass the general election vote and formally declare the results as a required preliminary to the inauguration of the new governor and other elected officials which took place at a joint session Thursday afternoon, January 3. The retiring governor submitted his provisional budget to the joint session Wednesday, while Thursday he and the new governor delivered their customary messages.

Concurrent with all this preliminary procedure, the committee on committees for both house and senate was hard at work building up the standing committee lists. The legislature adjourned Thursday afternoon until early next week when the report of the committee on committees will be presented and probably accepted without change, whereupon the Nebraska law makers will be ready to roll up their sleeves and get down to real business.

Circulating among the legislators to be found last week in hotel lobbies and around the state house, the Lowell Service reporter found a consensus that relief, liquor control and redistricting the state for the one-house legislature are the big three in the ranks of the problems to be met.

The relief problem is this—the FERA has been putting up about 90 per cent of the funds spent for relief in the state, while the counties have contributed the remainder and the state, as a governmental organization, nothing. Federal Administrator Hopkins has informed State Administrator Haynes that the federal situation is such that Nebraska must carry in the neighborhood of 40 per cent of the load, which would mean about \$5,000,000. With one out of every six or seven Nebraskans on relief (due in part to the drouth), this state cannot get along without federal aid, according to government officials who have studied the situation, so it is a case of "muet" for the law makers. Most other states have done it, however, so Nebraska will be merely following the accepted course.

Governor Cochran's liquor control bill being drafted by Attorney General Wright is said to provide a plan for private sale, both by the bottle and by the drink, under strict state supervision. Absolute authority over the liquor industry would be held by three state commissioners; licenses would be limited to a few in each locality and the state board rather than local authorities would grant them.

There are certain to be other liquor control bills introduced including a state store plan similar to the Iowa system. The chances are that all bills dealing with the problem will be considered and the best features of each embodied in a rewritten bill.

Early indications are that the legislators will decide on 50 members for the one-house legislature, meaning that the state will be divided into as many legislative districts in place of the existing set up. However, even if 50 members are decided upon, there may be fewer than 50 districts with the number of law makers coming from each being decided strictly on a population basis.

Prospective grist for the legislative mill not already reported by the Lowell Service includes the following:

A chain store tax bill is being sponsored by the Nebraska Federation of Retailers. The proposed measure would license every retail store in the state, ranging from a minimum fee of \$2 for small single stores to a maximum license of \$150 for every store in a chain of more than 20 units.

Senator Callan of Odell plans to introduce a bill which he says would create an efficient state highway system without additional cost to taxpayers. Funds would be derived thru collection of licenses and fines for traffic violations. The bill also looks to the co-ordination of various existing state law enforcement facilities. Personnel would be retained on merit.

Representative Cone of Valley has in mind a bill canceling penalties and interest of delinquent taxes to speed up their collection. He also intends to ask a legislative investigation of milk prices and milk distribution, as "there are too many city ordinances in regard to inspections and licensing which interfere with the farmer's right to sell his own products."

The state insurance law covering losses by hail is in line to get the axe, as the farmers of the state apparently do not want the insurance and have failed to use it. Last season only 57 farmers took out policies with the hail insurance fund. Premiums amounted to only \$6,464 and total losses allowed were \$7,711.

New legislation, authorizing counties to issue bridge bonds retireable from tolls will be sought by Richardson county proponents of a bridge across the Missouri river at Rulo.

The legislature will decide whether the Genoa Indian school property donated recently to the state by the federal government will be used as a home for epileptic patients now housed in state hospitals, as a home for aged persons, or as a home for "border-line" children. Chairman Clara Clayton of the board of control says epileptic and subnormal children must be cared for now in the home for feeble minded at Beatrice when they should be by themselves.

Many legislators believe that Nebraska's old age pension law is worse than no old age pension law at all, and that it should be amended so that sufficient revenue is available to make it worth-while, or repealed. The state should not hold itself in a pretense of doing something for the welfare of the aged when in fact it has done nothing at all.

Nebraska's tax bill in 1934 was about a million dollars lower than in 1933, as indicated by figures from 81 of the 93 counties, while strangely enough the gross fund in the state treasury now is about a million dollars higher than a year ago.

The 1934 slash in taxes was made in the face of greatly increased relief demands, thanks to the FERA and a scaling down of state and school levies. The 81 counties reported a total tax bill of \$29,307,779 for 1934 compared with \$30,038,694 for the same counties in 1933. With estimated figures for the other 12 counties, the tax bill this year is expected to be near \$41,000,000, against \$42,906,527 a year ago. Only county, city and village taxes are higher this year than last. This is the fifth successive year that Nebraska has trimmed down its tax bill.

Nebraska reached its tax peak in 1929 with a load of \$59,442,398. Next year the bill dropped a million dollars, two millions the next, seven millions in 1932, nearly as much in 1933, and now in 1934, another million is taken off.

Increased collections brought about in large part by the pouring of federal funds into the state are given credit for the fatter condition of the state treasury this year as compared with a year ago. The biennial report of the state treasurer for the two years ended June 30, 1934, shows total disbursements of \$50,716,800 and a gross balance at the end of the period of \$6,100,150.

The large number of horses reported to the state veterinarian as having died from effects of emergency feeds pressed into service because of the shortage brought on the cornbelt by the drouth, has created considerable comment among university and other state officials. Latest reports from the university indicate that the emergency feed is not the real trouble, altho it may be contributory.

This equine malady referred to variously as forage poisoning, corn stalk disease and sleeping sickness, is usually contracted from corn forage, according to university animal husbandry experts. The principal cause of the disease is a bac-

terial infection which is made worse by the infected animals eating wormy or drouth stricken corn.

An advisable precaution against the malady is to keep the horses out of the corn fields, as investigation reveals that the majority of the cases were found where the animals had been used for husking corn or had been allowed to run in the stalk fields. The greatest number of cases in Nebraska have been reported from the north-central section.

The sun is shining brightly again for J. R. Farris, Bryan appointee to the office of state purchasing agent, whose anxious moments over re-appointment at the hands of Governor Cochran are over. He keeps the job which he has held for six years—two under Bryan in 1923-24 and four under the same governor in 1930-34. Farris is a Lincoln man and used to be general superintendent of W. J. Bryan's famous "Commoner."

Before stepping from the governor's seat which he has warmed for six years, Charles W. Bryan took time to assuage the fears of Platte valley hay growers who in their minds' eye see all manner of weevils running around in their alfalfa fields as the result of the governor's having lifted an embargo against Oregon and Idaho alfalfa hay. Governor Bryan said that there is no serious danger of infestation of Nebraska fields, that certificates would be required of the imported hay showing it to be free of weevil, that the hay which had been stacked and baled was not likely to contain the pests even if they had been present in the field, and that the order lifting the embargo would expire May 1, leaving the weevils only five months in which to pack up their things and hie themselves to the cornhusker state.

The retiring attorney general, Paul Good, outlined a four-point plan for improving law enforcement in Nebraska in his biennial report submitted to the retiring governor, C. W. Bryan. Good proposes a larger and better trained state sheriff's force which would supplement local officers but not supplant them; a system of district attorneys operating under the attorney general; adoption by the state of the model code of criminal procedure proposed by the American law institute; and employment by the board of pardons and paroles of a competent psychiatrist and two or more deputy parole officers to work under the direction of the chief probation officer.

Under the 1933 salary reducing act, state officers taking their posts this month will receive the following salaries: Governor Cochran, \$6,000 instead of the \$7,500 Bryan received; supreme judges \$5,200 instead of \$7,500, except in the case of the four holdover jurists, Goss, Rose, Eberly and Paine, who will continue at the high rate until their terms expire two and four years hence. Railway Commissioner Maupin gets \$3,400 per annum while his two holdover colleagues get \$5,000 a year each; Attorney General Wright gets \$4,000 or \$1,000 less than his predecessor; the state tax commissioner takes a similar cut, and other elective state officers are reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,400 each.

Board of control members hereafter appointed are to draw only

\$3,200 annually instead of the \$4,000 present members are getting and will continue to receive during the remainder of their respective terms.

BRIEFLY STATED

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Degman, of Buffalo Gap, S. D., arrived here last week and visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Davidson. Before her marriage Mrs. Degman was Dorothy Davidson.

Warm weather here Tuesday and Wednesday somewhat honeycombed ice and skaters anxiously awaited sub-zero weather to again tune up the sheets of congealed water—especially on Kersenbrock lake.

January 12 is the anniversary of the great "School Children's" bazaar which wiped out hundreds, if not thousands of lives, and dwarfed pens and tongues ever since in an effort at describing the intensity of it.

Hunters here are speculating on where the crows are spending the winter. Comparatively a small number have been seen this season, giving rise to the theory they sensed a hard winter and moved south.

Last Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Van Every and sons, Laverne and Dean went to near Bartlett, Spalding and Burwell where highway projects on which Mr. Van Every was foreman last summer, were inspected.

Goose lake, southern Holt county, was reported by several ranchers who live near it to have been bone dry last summer. This lake normally is up to 18 feet in depth. At present it contains a small amount of water.

Mr. and Mrs. Enard Leach returned last Friday evening from Forest City, Mo., where the couple and children spent Christmas. Hazardous automobile traveling was reported caused by icy paving over most of the distance.

Mr. and Mrs. William Froelich, of Chicago, here for the holidays at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Stout, plan to remain a few more days before starting the journey to their home. Their son, Billy, is with the parents here.

Holt county is in the third district of the new farm census setup with Mrs. S. Elizabeth Jenkinson, of Monroe, named as supervisor. Headquarters are at Columbus. The number of persons likely to be employed in Holt county is 20.

Lyle M. Durham, band instructor at the public school here, spent Christmas with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Durham, of Elgin, Nebraska. Mr. Durham's brother, Floy, of Sioux City, also was at the parent home Christmas.

L. R. Harpstreith, of Lincoln, and wife and three weeks old baby, arrived here Thursday and have rented the Max Golden residence. Mr. Harpstreith has been assigned here as engineer in charge of the paving from the center of town south on Fourth street to the Northwestern tracks. The work is to start Jan. 17.

Members of the Epworth League of the Methodist church here held a New Year's Watch party at the church with the following present: Bernice Scofield, Rebecca Haskins, Rose Robinson, of Page, Peggy Camere, John Ghetty, Neva Lierman, Violet Butterfield, Rev. May and several others whose names were not learned.

Jack rabbits are reported plentiful all over Holt county and hunters would be out bagging them save for a democratic market price starting them in the face. One man figured that with the price of shotgun shells on one side and the price of rabbit skins on the other, he would owe someone \$1,000 for his hunting labors by spring.

Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Harrington entertained twenty couples at a 7 o'clock dinner at the Golden hotel last Saturday. Card games were played at the Harrington home following the dinner. Mrs. Hugh J. Birmingham won the woman's high score and Edward T. Campbell the men's high score prize. Mrs. H. E. Coyne won the traveling prize.

New Ford Models Show Improvement in Bodies

Last Thursday Henry Ford showed to newspaper men, at Detroit, the new Ford V-8 for 1935.

Most striking feature of the new car is body lines which are distinctively modern and a definite departure from any previous Ford design.

The new car also embodies a combination of major engineering developments aimed at increased riding comfort—which has been called the "center-poise" ride.

Numerous improvements in chassis design to provide increased ease of control also are included.

Two important improvements have been made in the Ford V-8 engine, of which more than 1,300,000 are now on the road.

In addition Ford has developed a new type of body—the touring sedan, with unusually sleek lines and embodying a fitted rear trunk compartment integral with the body.

Safety glass is standard equipment not only in windshields, but also in all doors and windows in all body types.

The new car marks the present culmination of developments begun by Ford three years ago at the time of the announcement of the V-8 engine. In the three years intervening, Ford has been engaged in the development of a combination of engineering improvements aimed at providing a degree of riding comfort and ease of control comparable with the performance of the engine itself. The new body

designs are a further evidence of the progress of Ford engineering.

The Circus

The most appreciated gift Santa Claus presented was a large cake—in drouth territory.

It's so foolish to spend all our money for coal.

Cheer up, the sun is coming north to melt Nebraska's eyes.

South Dakota man claims his hat lay against the side of a house four days and nights during a dust storm. Sounds like a 10 gallon affair.

The argument as to whether there is or is not a Santa Claus is like two men standing at the Center of Main street in Long Pine while arguing about whether it is 2 or 3 o'clock a. m.

The proposed postoffice building means a lot to O'Neill and Holt county, and two or three of them to some land owner.

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