

Death of Unicam Foretold

By MELVIN PAUL

The Frontier's Statehouse Correspondent

LINCOLN—As the tax problem quieted down for the time being, statehouse attention this week turned to the question of whether the present one-house non-partisan legislature needs improving.

A committee of nine men—both republicans and democrats—which has met several times in Lincoln, has announced it is sure the people of Nebraska want a change.

After its latest meeting, State Republican Chairman Dave Martin of Kearney said that the committee had made its decision but wasn't ready to announce it. He said there were some legal technicalities to straighten out and that the press and the public would just have to wait until the end of August.

That didn't stop enterprising reporters who the next day called up members of the committee one-by-one and discussed the matter. No one would come right out and say what the decision had been but enough hints were dropped to lead reporters to believe that the goal will be a return to the two-house partisan legislature.

Nebraska is the only state in the union with a one-house non-partisan legislature. It has had it only 16 years.

When a reporter asked one member of the committee, State Democratic Chairman William

Meier of Minden, about speculation that the committee planned to push a bicameral idea, he answered that such an assumption is "pretty well justified." Sam Reynolds of Omaha said that the two-house system was good enough for the founding fathers and should be good enough for Nebraska. To arguments that it might be difficult to sell the bicameral to the voters (who must ultimately decide because the matter will take a constitutional amendment), Reynolds replied, "I think it is the committee's business to push what it thinks is best for Nebraska and not just what it thinks will be easiest to persuade people to vote for."

Another committee member, Hugh Riley of Fairbury, said that a private poll had showed a surprising number of people want to bring back the two-house system.

But a different kind of reaction wasn't long in coming. Statisticians at the statehouse came up with the estimate that a bicameral would cost at least \$400,000 a session.

The 1953 session, longest in unicameral history, only cost \$153,000.

Here's how they figured the bicameral cost.

The final two-house session in 1935 cost \$202,000. The first one-house session in 1937 cost \$103,000.

That indicated that a bicameral cost about twice as much as a unicameral legislature. The 1953 unicameral cost doubled would be \$306,000.

But actually the increase in the cost of living in recent years means that it would probably take a lot more than that.

For instance salaries for legislators were \$800 apiece in 1935. They now are \$1,744 apiece.

Suppose there were a senate of 33 members and a house of representatives of 100 as it was in 1935.

At \$1,744 apiece, the salary figure alone would be almost \$232,000. That's about \$80,000 more than it cost to run the whole unicameral this year.

Employees' salaries in the 1953 session totaled \$39,494. Hugo Seb, clerk of the legislature, estimates

it would take at least twice as many employees for two houses because of all the extra clerks for committees and secretaries to handle legislators' correspondence. That might mean \$120,000 in employees' salaries.

So even if incidental expenses stayed around \$44,000 and bill drafting costs at \$10,855—and it doesn't take much addition to see that \$232,000, \$120,000, \$44,000 and \$10,855 will add up to around \$406,855. And that is about 2 1/2 times what it cost to run the unicameral in its longest, costliest session this year.

Taxes— State officials on the state board of equalization seemed increasingly confident that the statewide valuation changes they ordered will "stand up."

A psychological help came when the Burlington and Union Pacific railroads withdrew their suits against the state board. Attorneys for the railroads said that while they still thought railroad assessments are too high they believed the board had made a real effort and they didn't want to stand in its way that year.

Although Buffalo and Dawes counties had asked rehearings, the state board was given an opinion by the attorney general's office that it is too late now. The only recourse is with the state supreme court. Buffalo county appealed its assessment hikes by the board.

But an unmistakable feeling of confident relaxation was seen on the part of state officials with regard to the tax question. The fact that North Platte citizens, apparently hit hard with a valuation raise, learned that their tax mill levy rate was dropping 30 mills was cheering news.

To be able to pay \$30 less taxes on each \$1,000 worth of property was a fulfillment of predictions by state officials that equalization would hurt most people less than was feared.

Slow-Down— State highway officials ran into a buzz saw of opposition to relocation of U.S. 30 at Kimball, State Engineer L. N. Riss said the highway is being improved all along so it can take greater volumes of high speed traffic. It wouldn't be good to take that kind of traffic through the middle of Kimball, as is now done. So a by-pass around the south end of the city is planned.

But citizens vigorously objected. At a hearing at Kimball, Riss said he became convinced the department will just have to wait "until the people of Kimball realize that it really isn't in their best interests to have the highway where it is now." Riss said both he and the federal bureau of highways were willing to compromise to the extent of continuing to maintain the present highway as a city route in addition to building the bypass highway.

But since Kimball apparently wants no change for the present, the project will just be temporarily shelved, Riss said. The highway department's attention will go some place else.

But Riss expressed confidence that Kimball will "see the light" so that the project can still be launched sometime within the next two years.

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Personals

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Richardson of Ainsworth were Tuesday visitors in the home of their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Hill. Mr. Richardson and Mr. Hill drove to Pierce to attend field day.

Last Thursday visitors in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Halva were Miss Martha Chocholosek of Verdigré, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Nukuda of Omaha and Mr. Leonard Juracek and son of Star.

Mrs. C. R. Hill and family spent a week in Hebron visiting Mrs. C. W. Hill and son, Ralph while C. R. Hill attended a meeting at North Platte.

Pvt. Francis A. Murray returned Wednesday, August 12, to Ft. Sill, Okla., after spending a furlough here visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Murray, and other relatives. Upon his return he entered a school which is in connection with the field artillery.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Janzing visited Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Clyde in their new home Sunday afternoon.

Christie Janousek, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Janousek, spent several days in Columbus visiting her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. E. O. Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Hill took Christie to Norfolk Tuesday where she was met by her parents and returned home with them.

Mrs. Edna Huebert, Mrs. Tom Harding and Mrs. Clifford Harding attended the rodeo in Burwell Saturday evening and Sunday was spent in Ord visiting her sister, Mrs. Dale Norman.

Mrs. Joyce Kemper and son of Creighton recently visited at the Dale Fetrow home. Mrs. Kemper and Mrs. Fetrow were college classmates.

Miss Mildred Gallup of Stratford, Okla., came Thursday, August 7, for an extended visit in the home of her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Pat Gallup. Mr. and Mrs. Alton and Miss Mildred Gallup of Stratford, Okla., went to Battle Creek Sunday to visit Mr. and Mrs. Gene Taylor and son.

Mr. and Mrs. Dale Fetrow and family went to Norfolk Wednesday, August 12, to attend the circus.

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O'NEILL LOCALS
Mr. and Mrs. Louis W. Reimer, Jr., and Jimmie and Mrs. Louis W. Reimer, Sr., drove to Fremont Friday to visit Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Taylor and son. Mrs. Reimer, Sr., remained at the Taylor home and the Reimer, Jr., family went on to Gretna to visit her mother. All returned to O'Neill Sunday.
Mr. and Mrs. John H. McCarville and family returned Sunday from a week's vacation spent in Ellsworth, Rochester and Winona, Minn., and they also visited Waterloo, Ia.
Mrs. Joseph L. McCarville, Jr., and children, who had been visiting relatives in Winnebago, returned Sunday.
Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow Meiena are vacationing this week in the Black Hills.
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Lyman and family returned on Wednesday, August 12, to O'Neill after spending the summer in Jefferson, S.D.
Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Lee and family returned Saturday from York where they had spent a month's vacation. Reverend Lee was guest minister one Sunday at First Presbyterian church in Nebraska City.

22- Bitneys Add- Atkinson
WD—Frank A Murray- O'N to Richard L. Hovey &— wt. O'N 3-14-53 \$1- Part of SE 1/4 SW 1/4 19-29-11 150 ft x 153 ft
WD—Gertrude Kaup to Wilfred K Kaup 8-14-53 \$36,400- NW 1/4 7- Lots 3 & 4 & E 1/2 SW 1/4 7- N 1/2 NW 1/4 18-30-15 except 25 A in NE 1/4 NW 1/4 7

DR. H. L. BENNETT
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EDW. M. GLEESON
DENTIST
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Rexall Bldg.
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MILLER THEATER
— Atkinson —
Fri.-Sat. Aug. 21-22
Sun.-Mon.-Tues. Aug. 23-24-25
Wed.-Thurs. Aug. 26-27

REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS
WD—Roy Johnson to Roy Johnson Sr 8-10-53 \$1- Lot 2 Bld D- Millards Add- O'Neill
WD—Elven S White to