

CAPITOL NEWS

(Compiled by Neb. Press Ass'n.)
Lincoln, Neb.—Lines were being drawn in the legislature this week for what may be one of the most bitter controversies of the 1949 session: proposed repeal of Nebraska's pre-primary law.

The bill, signed by 17 senators, already has produced more name-calling than any before the unicameral.

Under the law, political parties hold conventions when delegates endorse their first and second choices among the candidates for each office. The names of these favored two are listed in that order on the primary election ballot, while those of other candidates are rotated.

The government committee held public hearing on the repeal bill, and heard opponents from both parties label the pre-

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ent law vicious, undemocratic, and repulsive. Committee members then sent the bill out to the legislature for debate.

That night, however, political party leaders met with legislators and asked that the law be amended instead of repealed. Pre-primary convention delegates would endorse four rather than two candidates, and all names would be rotated. Filings would be required before the convention, and delegates to the state convention named by county conventions rather than at the primary election two years previous.

Senator W. J. Williams, Ravenna, one of the principal introducers of the repeal, accepted the amendment. He told the legislature he would offer them only if the lawmakers rejected repeal.

Friends of the amendments contended it was unfair to deny them full hearing on the floor of the legislature. They charged repeal of the pre-primary law would sound the death knell of the political party system.

Opponents answered the arguments. Senator W. Halsey Bohike, Hastings, suggested, "the boys in that smoke-filled hotel room apparently helped these senators out in time of need. They never did a darn thing for me, I never expect them to, and they don't even have anything I want."
Sen. Arthur Carmody, Tren-

ton, said the number of primary election voters dropped from about 342,000 in 1949, before the pre-primary law was in effect, to 278,000 last year, when public interest was at a high pitch, due to the presidential preferential election.

He said every formal opposition voiced at his committee's hearing on the repeal came from "a wheel horse of some size" in both political parties, adding, "the primary is the politicians' election, and that's why they want to control it."

Sen. William Metzger, Cedar Creek, suggested the bill was not properly handled since a majority of the committee members who heard it were co-signers of the repeal. But he turned down Carmody's invitation to present charges of unfair hearing.

Williams is expected to present the hotly contested amendments, Feb. 23.

The legislature gave a 31-7 vote of confidence in the effectiveness of the tax commissioner's fieldmen, sent out to aid county officials in assessments. Sen. Don Hanna, Valentine, was the most outspoken of the opposition. He said the fieldmen smacked of federal "snappers."

John Callan, the budget committee said the three additional men the tax commissioner wants to hire would cost the state about \$24,000. On the basis of present valuations, this investment would return about \$198,000 to the state, according to Sen. William Metzger, Cedar Creek.

The unicameral has indicated it may be willing to depart, at least partially, from its former practice of setting ceilings on the salaries of virtually all key positions. It already has removed the maximums on the pay of accountants hired by the state auditor, and on the director and her assistant in the nurses bureau.

Proponents said this would permit higher salaries for deserving employees, a sentiment with which Metzger agreed. "The state has operated a training school long enough," he said. "If we are to get and keep competent help, we must be willing to pay a living wage."

Possibility of state aid for educating physically and mentally handicapped children became more a probability after the education committee approved the proposal. The bill, by Sen. Otto Frohs, Gering, would be available to school districts already providing the regular per-pupil costs for the abnormal youngsters.

In this event, the state would put up a maximum of \$100 a year for educable children whose IQ's are lower than normal, and \$400 a year for the physically handicapped.

Support of the bill came primarily from parents of spastic children.

The Nebraska Reclamation Association met in convention at Lincoln to express what appeared to be unanimous endorsement of the Pick-Sloan plan for developing the Missouri river basin, as opposed to a Missouri Valley Authority. Delegates also approved a resolution asking Gov. Val Peterson to appoint a citizens committee to study reclamation plans for the state.

The committee would analyze the Reclamation Bureau's development plan for the Lower Platte basin, and its effect on existing power and irrigation agencies. Possibilities of integrating use of stream and ground water would be investigated, and the committee would recommend changes it believes necessary in present law.

The Reclamation Association convention defeated a proposed resolution which would have put the group on record as favoring a policy of limiting irrigation water from government-financed projects for use on family-sized farms. Proponents argued this did not make the Association subscribe to the Reclamation Bureau's definition of a family-sized farm as 160 acres, but merely opposed using federal tax money to irrigate large corporate holdings of land.

C. Petrus Peterson, Lincoln, was nominated as the state's director on the National association. Ray Babcock, Sidney, was elected president, and Marcelle Allen, Lincoln, secretary-treasurer. Other officials elected were:

E. A. House, director from the newly-created 10th district; J. Russell Battle, Hay Springs, to succeed Joe Leedon, Gordon, in the 1st; Frank Butler, Cambridge, to succeed B. Russell Anderson, Osallala, in the 3rd; Dr. E. G. Johnson, Grand Island, to succeed E. P. Ryan, Grand Island, in the 6th; Gordon Roberts, Omaha, to succeed Edwin Van Horne, Omaha, in the 8th, and Babcock was re-elected director from the 2nd.

Herbert Marshall was named to represent the second Congressional district, replacing Louis S. Clarke, both of Omaha, and Clark Fuller, Sidney, to succeed Ernest H. Staubitz, Kearney in the fourth.

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The new 1949 Studebaker Champion five-passenger Starlight coupe retains its position as one of Raymond Loewy's outstanding automotive designs. Among its many advancements is a new interior luxury featuring two-tone contrast between the upholstery and the side walls and head-lining. Instrument panels and window reveals, as well as steering wheels, are colored to blend with the new upholstery. Champion engine performance has been stepped up through the adoption of a new carburetor and changes in the valve lift and intake manifold.



OUT OF OLD NEBRASKA

BY JAMES C. OLSON, Superintendent of State Historical Society

The celebration of the University of Nebraska's 80th birthday on February 15 cannot help but cause thoughtful Nebraskans to reflect on the great progress made by the institution in the short span of four score years. That progress is even more notable when one considers the small uncertain beginnings which are a part of the university's early history.

A study of the first faculty reveals much about those beginnings.

Including the chancellor, it consists of five men. To calm fears that the university would fall under the domination of one religious sect or another, great care had been exercised to choose men representing various religious faiths. The chancellor, in addition to his administrative responsibilities, occupied the chair of "intellectual and moral science." He also taught Latin, Greek, and history on the side.

Allen R. Benton, the university's first chancellor, was a man of considerable abilities. Although by temperament more suited to the calm of the classroom than to the arena of rough-and-tumble frontier administration, he capably and conscientiously guided the university through its first perilous years.

One of his colleagues wrote of him: "so varied was his scholarship that he was equally at home in almost every department of college work... Nothing slyly ever appeared from his tongue or pen... No fact or statement

Winning the Snow Battle Was a Huge Undertaking

This winter will long be remembered for its Big Snow. Thousands of towns, farms and ranches were isolated. Drifts were so deep and firm that normal snow-removal methods were futile.

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was ever colored by him. Every member of the faculty, every citizen who formed his acquaintance, at once trusted implicitly every word that he uttered."

A member of the first faculty who made a particularly deep impression on the people of the state was Rev. Samuel Aughey, professor of natural sciences. Professor Aughey was indefatigable in his efforts to demonstrate the agricultural possibilities of Nebraska, and his work, possibly as much as that of any other man, helped dispel the myth that Nebraska was part of the "great American desert."

Another well-known member of the first faculty was Rev. O. C. Dake, professor of English literature. Noted for his "Legend of the Weeping Water," and other poems, Professor Dake has been called, "the first Nebraska author."

All in all, the members of that

faculty, and those who succeeded them, were men of conscientious competence w/o laid for the University of Nebraska a solid foundation on which it has been possible to erect one of the nation's truly great institutions of higher learning.

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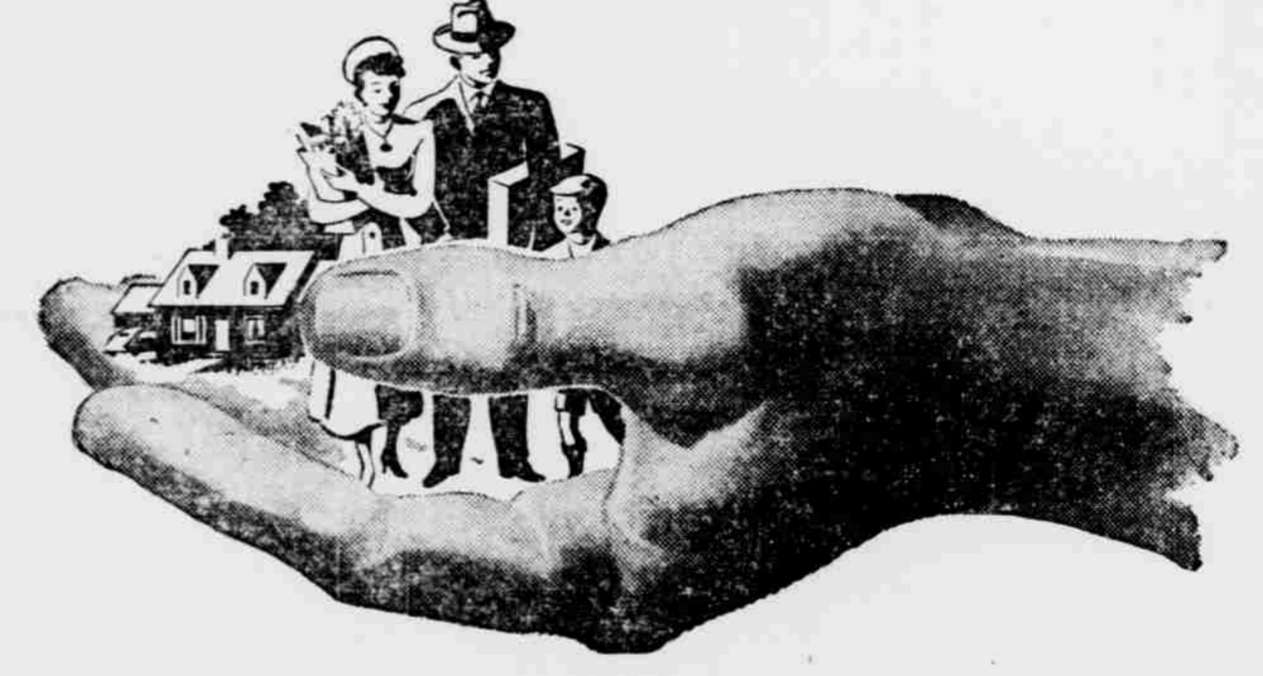
Elsie Gopen Wiles et al—J. Kaffenberger and Wf., 2-10-49, Frc. L. 4, 5, 6, B. 21 Pl., \$100
Wm. O. Ketelsen—W. O. Ketelsen & Gerald, 1-23-49, 1 B. 45 Platts., \$100.

Donald J. Horsh et al—Walter Jacobmeier, 1-31-49 N¹/₂ SW¹/₄, 28-10-9, \$100.

Amelia Umland—Wm. Umland et al, 1-23-49, L. 13 B. 26 Eagle, \$100.

C. H. Stohlman & Wf.—J. E. Lisle & Dora, 2-9-49, L. 476 & So 43" 2" B. 477 Louis., \$3500.00.

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