

## CAPITOL NEWS

LINCOLN—The week started out quietly enough in the legislature. The labor committee, by a 6 to 3 vote killed Sen. George Syas' bill to close the Milford trade school. Dr. Frank D. Ryder, state health director, said he was thinking of taking a VA job amid reports of legislative pressure for his resignation. Sen. Arthur Carmody failed to get enough votes on the floor to raise his partisan legislature bill. And the lawmakers wrestled with the perennial problem of school land leases.

It was just a routine legislative week—until Friday afternoon, when most of the senators had their cars pointed homeward.

Then, as a crowded hearing room sat shocked, Sen. W. J. (Lefty) Williams, not the most predictable legislator, broke up a meeting of the government committee which was considering two of Williams' bills, both dealing with the reorganization of the state administrative department.

Governor Val Peterson had ignited the outburst when, answering a question asked by Sen. Sam Klaver, he admitted that he was "not too enthusiastic" about the Williams bills. The governor questioned the value of the research that it was inadequate and he urged the committee to make a much more careful study of administrative departments before approving the bills.

The measures—L. B. 315 and 316—are the result of a report by the legislative council committee on reorganization of state government, of which Williams was a member. They propose, among other things, setting up a department of taxation and finance which would, for instance, collect the cigarette and gasoline taxes now handled by the department of agriculture.

The governor said the legislative council committee talked with Agriculture Director Rufus Howard only 15 minutes before arriving at its conclusions.

Instead of a legislative committee making such a study, the governor suggested, the job might better be done by a "little Hoover commission" as proposed in the 1949 legislature by Sen. Tom Davies of Lincoln. At any rate, he said, the task should be handled by "qualified personnel" and not senators who "are not trained and are not able to spend their full time at the job."

That's what got Williams goat.

He jumped to his feet and moved that the bills be killed.

Bitterly he said, "When we've

done everything possible and then to have the governor of this state stand before this committee and say that members of the legislature are not trained and not qualified . . ."

When Chairman Karl Vogel ruled him out of order, Williams asked to be excused then stomped across the statehouse rotunda, through the senate chamber and into the cloakroom where he jammed on his hat and left the building, a bitter man, indeed.

Earlier the same day, Lefty had done better. He was named chairman of a seven-man committee to study the operation of the state assistance department to see if something could be done about the red tape which Williams said was doubling the cost of the aid program in some counties.

Lefty's colleagues had rejected a proposal by Sen. Charles Tvrdek of Omaha that \$50,000 be appropriated to hire a private management consultant firm to make the study.

Tvrdek's argument was much like that to be made in the afternoon by the governor. Legislators aren't experts in assistance matters, he said. Why not have some real, professional efficiency experts handle the job?

And another thing, "Where on God's green earth would a legislative committee find the time?" he demanded.

But the senators liked better the proposal of Speaker Ed Hoyt of McCook who suggested that the legislative council reference bureau, a research agency, be called upon to help.

The vote was 25 to 11 and as soon as it was announced, Lt. Gov. Charles Warner pulled a scrap of paper from his pocket and named Williams as the committee chairman with these members:

John Beaver, Beemer; Robert McNutt, Lincoln; Dwight Burney, Hartington; Sam Klaver, Omaha; Otto Prohs, Gering and C. E. Metzger, Cedar Creek.

Williams said the group's first meeting would be this Saturday with public hearings set for following Saturdays until the probe is finished.

The first bill to be introduced this session — not surprisingly labeled L. B. 1—is having some pretty rough going. Sen. Arthur Carmody of Trenton is sponsor of the measure which would set up under the department of agriculture a division of wheat utilization. It would be financed by a levy on each bushel of wheat grown in the state. This levy, 5 mills at first, was later cut to 2 and the bill was amended to make participation voluntary instead of compulsory.

Sen. William Hern of Chadron, a chairman of the agriculture committee which kept the bill bottled up for a couple of weeks after its hearing, is one of its staunchest foes. So is Sen. Chris Metzger of Cedar Creek. They badgered Carmody with questions as the bill came up for its first floor test.

But Carmody managed to get 27 votes to have the bill advanced against only eight dissenters.

This week, as it came up for second reading, the enemies were plotting more amendments.

No big blowout this Fourth of July. That was assured when Sen. Sam Klaver's holy-concocted fireworks ban bill cleared final reading with a 38 to 4 vote and its emergency clause still intact. That's the clause which makes a bill law as soon as it's signed by the governor.

There had been reports of an attempt to knock off the emergency clause—making the bill effective somewhere around the middle of August—so that there could be one last glorious pyrotechnical binge this Independence Day.

Defeat is something you have to learn to live with in the legislature, as any veteran who has seen his pet bill voted down can tell you.

This week, Senator Earl J. Lee of Fremont knew defeat and he was a little weary of it. For the third straight session, the legislature has refused to place the calling of a constitutional convention on the ballot. This has been one of Senator Lee's fondest hopes.

When he was told the government committee by an 8 to 1 vote had killed this year's bill and was asked whether he'd try to resurrect it on the floor, he sighed and said, "No, I'm tired of trying to save the world. Let somebody else do it for awhile."

**DELAYED REUNION**  
 Because Harold Olson of Blair was only six months old when he was separated from his family, he didn't discover until last fall that he had a brother three years older than himself. The two were reunited for the first time in 27 years, when called to Minneapolis because of the serious illness of their grandmother.

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