

My experience has shown, as I served in both houses of the legislature, that there was so much sleight of hand, that the problem was if we did not do too much in government we did too little. As the days go on and the years into the future we are going to have great problems to face, and I wonder if we can afford the luxury of a lot of elected officials.

I think that the time has come for us to meet the problems of the people, and there is no question in my mind that a small, visible body can do it more effectively.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. Chairman, I yield five minutes to Mr. Gilchrist.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gilchrist.

DELEGATE GILCHRIST: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the Convention: I was accused at one point in the debate on this in our Committee of being the non-resident expert from Nebraska. I reached this status because I thought I would profit by looking at Nebraska's experience with the unicameral legislature, and find out what their background was, what the origins of the system were, and how it had proved out in practice.

I might say that the idea of the unicameral legislature in Nebraska originated in 1913 with a man named Norton.

In 1932 or 1933 George W. Norris, a senator, then on the outs with the Republican Party to which he belonged, picked up the idea and threw it into the Nebraska election as a constitutional amendment.

Senator Norris did this on a very cute basis. In the depths of the depression the Nebraska legislature, following the Roosevelt landslide in 1932, had been completely changed; almost every face was new. They had a horrible session. They were totally unable to cope with the problems which appeared before them.

On top of this, the Senator decided that it would be a good idea to reduce costs, and that it could be sold on this basis. They made up a three section amendment to the Constitution of Nebraska, providing that the total salary of the members of the House in this new body should be \$37,500, for all the members, thus producing the beneficent salary of \$872 per legislator.

He put together this proposal and sandwiched it in on the ballot between a proposal to repeal prohibition in Nebraska and

a proposal to reintroduce pari-mutuel betting. All three passed.

Following this, I thought it would be useful to take a look and see what kind of services Nebraska has produced and what kind of results this system has produced.

I found that Nebraska, with a population of about half that of the State of Maryland, has a budget about one-fourth that of the State of Maryland, a larger percentage of which is devoted to legislative expenditures than in Maryland. I found that they are operating under a Constitution which has been amended more than a hundred times, including such amendments as in 1920 adopting the English language as the official language of Nebraska.

I found that they paid their jurists the 43rd salary in the nation in the order of pay. I found that a legislature of 49 people requires 19 committees to do its work.

When I looked to see what the arguments were for this, I found among them the League of Women Voters memorandum of recent years on why the unicameral system works in Nebraska, which states that it is more representative because legislative districts were set up with population as the determining factor. We have that.

The rules have been simplified to provide for most careful consideration of proposed legislation. Eagleton will take care of that.

Research facilities are available to the membership. This is also an Eagleton proposal.

The system eliminates conference committees and fixes responsibility for action in the legislature. There are Eagleton proposals on this.

By the election on a non-partisan basis the members vote on principle rather than on party line, and even Mr. Hanson has not suggested that we adopt non-partisan procedures. I do not know whether he expects them to vote on party line rather than on principle, because of this remark.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gilchrist, you have fifty seconds.

DELEGATE GILCHRIST: The present system has attracted men who would not otherwise serve.

The Nebraska experience has been no better and probably no worse than the rest of the states.

One person appeared before us, a Nebraskan who spent seven and a half years