

A second claimed disadvantage of bicameralism is the rivalry sometimes engendered between the two houses. Documented examples of this at the state level are not readily available, but a recent episode in the United States Congress illustrates the danger. In the case at point, appropriations to the executive departments suffered an extensive delay because the chairmen of the House and Senate appropriation committees could not agree, among other points, on where the conference committee, appointed to compromise the differences between the two chambers, was to sit.¹⁹

A third claimed objection to bicameralism is that it obscures responsibility and prevents accountability to the electorate. The claim here is that a measure can be passed in the two houses in slightly different form with agreement being deliberately not reached in conference so that the measure is defeated, although everyone is on record as being in favor; that a measure may be passed in one house under the claim that it is the best that could be obtained from the second house, rather than upon its merits; or that a measure may be passed in one house on the grounds that the choice was between a version worked out in conference or nothing. In all of these cases, it is impossible for the average voter to know who was responsible for the final action and who should be held to account.

THE MERITS OF UNICAMERALISM

Although unicameralists dispute the merits of every claim made for bicameralism and advance some positive arguments against bicameralism, their advocacy of unicameralism rests primarily upon positive advantages they see in the

¹⁹ See Trussell, *Money Bill Impasse in Congress Broken*, NEW YORK TIMES, July 19, 1962, p. 1, col. 2.

latter system. These claims may be summarized as follows:

Claim 1. UNICAMERALISM IS MORE EFFICIENT THAN BICAMERALISM.

The basic claim here is that each bill needs to be considered by only one house, eliminating wasteful duplication. This results in more expeditious introduction and consideration of legislation and elimination of the common end-of-session legislative logjam. Thus in the 1949 Nebraska legislative session, only seventeen bills were introduced after the first twenty legislative days, and a number of these were recommended by the governor or were substitute or consolidated bills introduced by committees rather than by individual legislators.²⁰ In this session, one-half of the bills acted upon by the legislature had been handled by the mid-point of the session. Three-fourths of those acted upon had been handled by the two-thirds point of the session. In the last two weeks, only forty-four bills were acted upon. Of these forty-four, eight were considered in the last week, and only one of these eight on the last day.²¹ In the 1961 session, twenty-five bills remained to be disposed of in the last two weeks and only six on the last day.²²

Claim 2. UNICAMERALISM RESULTS IN LEGISLATORS OF HIGHER QUALITY AND PRESTIGE.

Usually this claim is made in general terms.²³ However, a study in 1944 showed that over 50 per cent of Nebraska's unicameral legislators had had some college work or had attended an

²⁰ Spencer, *Nebraska Idea 15 Years Old*, 39 NAT'L MUN. REV. 85 (1950).

²¹ *Id.* at 86.

²² Spencer, *Nebraska "Unicam" Operates Smoothly*, 50 NAT'L CIVIC REV. 425 (1961).

²³ Carter, *The Unicameral Legislative System*, 21 FLA. L. J. 112 (1947); NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE, *supra* note 11.