

institution of higher learning.²⁴ Most had held public office or were influential members of civic or state social and economic organizations. In 1950 it was reported that two-thirds of the legislators had had previous legislative experience.²⁵

On the other hand, a careful student of the subject believes that the question of whether unicameralism improved the moral and intellectual caliber of Nebraska legislators is not resolved.²⁶

Claim 3. UNICAMERALISM RESULTS IN A MORE REPRESENTATIVE LEGISLATURE.

Under the bicameral system in Nebraska, 52 per cent of the legislators had only a single occupation while 48 per cent had two or more.²⁷ Under unicameralism, only 31 per cent had a single occupation while 69 per cent had two or more. Multiple occupations are claimed to bring a deeper awareness of problems and ramifications involved in legislation, and so to make the legislator more responsive to constituent needs. Conversely, the change to unicameralism in Nebraska did not disturb the ratio of farmers, business, and professional men elected to the legislature. Thus the cross section of the community remained the same, so that reduction in the number of representatives had no adverse effect.²⁸

Claim 4. UNICAMERALISM RESULTS IN A POSITIVE IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF ENACTED LEGISLATION.

Fewer statutes enacted by Nebraska's unicameral legislature were declared unconstitutional as compared with those

enacted by its bicameral legislature, and fewer statutes were found to have "bugs" or "jokers."²⁹ Some credit for this must go to the simultaneous institution of a legislative council with the establishment of a unicameral legislature, but proponents claim that the nature of a unicameral legislature deserves part of the credit. Several reasons for this are advanced. As will be noted below, unicameralism results in the introduction of fewer bills. This means that each bill that is introduced can be given more time. Second, the increased efficiency of the unicameral legislature eliminates the hasty consideration often given to bills under a bicameral system. Third, the unicameral legislature bears the full accountability for the quality of bills passed, and this responsibility cannot be blurred by sharing the responsibility with a second chamber. Fourth, bills are often passed in one house of a bicameral legislature with the expectation that they will be defeated in the second chamber.³⁰ Such expectations are not always fulfilled. Under unicameralism this type of miscalculation is eliminated.

Claim 5. UNICAMERALISM RESULTS IN HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

Under unicameralism, a Nebraska legislator pointed out that he could no longer introduce a bill at the request of a constituent and then ask the other house to kill it.³¹ The result of unicameralism in Nebraska was a spectacular 43 per cent reduction in the number of bills introduced.³² Concomitantly, the percentage of introduced bills that were enacted rose from less than 20 per

²⁴ Senning, *Unicameralism Passes Test*, 33 NAT'L MUN. REV. 61 (1944).

²⁵ Spencer, *supra* note 20, at 84.

²⁶ Shumate, *The Nebraska Unicameral Legislature*, 5 WESTERN POL. Q. 508 (1952).

²⁷ Senning, *supra* note 24.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Shumate, *supra* note 26.

³⁰ TRIMBLE, *supra* note 18, at 8.

³¹ State Senator Richard D. Marvel as cited by Janson, *The House Nebraska Built*, 229 HARPER'S 124 (Nov. 1964).

³² Shumate, *supra* note 26.