

## Organization of the Assembly

With preliminaries disposed of at separate pre-session caucuses of Republican and Democratic members, formal organization of the 59th General Assembly awaited only the sound of the opening gavels.

The House started business first with Representative William S. Lynes of Plainfield doing the honors. A former speaker returning to the House after an eight-year absence, Representative Lynes rapped the gavel a few seconds after 10 a.m. on January 9. Lieutenant Governor Edward J. McManus, who would hold office until his successor, former Speaker William L. Mooty, was sworn in three days later, called the Senate to order at 10:08 a.m.

House ritual called for election of a Temporary Speaker and this honor went to a former Speaker — Representative Arthur C. Hanson of Inwood. Hanson presided over the chamber until the formal election of Representative Henry C. Nelson of Forest City as the 1961 Speaker.

Representative Ray C. Cunningham of Ames moved that Representative Nelson be elected. Representative Vern Lisle of Clarinda, the 1959 Speaker, seconded the motion for the Republicans



and Representative Scott Swisher of Iowa City, the minority floor leader, seconded for the Democrats. Representative Nelson was then elected unanimously.

Unanimous election of Representative William E. Darrington of Persia, as Speaker Pro Tempore, followed quickly.

Upon taking the oath, Speaker Nelson uttered a pledge for a "no tax increase" session. "It is my feeling," he said in prepared remarks, "this Assembly means to approve an effective operating and capital improvements budget that calls for no tax increases." Then he ad libbed: "That's a big order." Nelson also alerted the House to reserve attention for such problems as reapportionment, educational costs, and revision of the road use tax formula which, he said, "are but a few of our major headaches."

On the pressing reapportionment matter Speaker Nelson said: "The people of Iowa rejected the plan for a constitutional convention that was aimed at reapportioning this Assembly. It is our responsibility, therefore, to effectively reapportion the Assembly during this session and I am confident of your determination and ability to do so."

Nelson continued the precedent set in 1959 by Speaker Verne Lisle by announcing his House standing committees on the session's first day, giving that body some lead time over the Senate.

In the Senate, opening day ritual provided only



for the election of a President Pro Tempore and the unanimous choice for that office was Senator Irving D. Long of Manchester, a Republican of six sessions. The real story behind these formalities, however, could be traced to the pre-session caucuses where things were not as tranquil as they appeared on the session's opening day.

First such caucus was on November 30, 1960, when Governor-Elect Norman A. Erbe called House and Senate Republican members to a "get acquainted" meeting at Des Moines. It was anything but harmonious, though, as rural and city brethren immediately got into a wrangle over reapportionment. Reporters were excluded from the meeting following adoption of a motion by Senator D. C. Nolan of Iowa City, seconded by Senator J. Kendall Lynes of Plainfield. But newsmen had no difficulty establishing that there had been disagreement in the caucus over whether or not the word "fair" should be deleted or retained in a resolution pledging the group to pass "a fair reapportionment plan." This joint caucus apparently set the tone for separate caucuses of House and Senate Republicans which were to come later.

House Republicans met in Des Moines on December 12, 1960, to choose their candidate for Speaker from among these four members: Henry C. Nelson, Vern Lisle, LeRoy Chalupa, and A. L. Mensing.

Predictions were that the real fight was between



Representative Nelson, a 59-year-old farm manager, and Representative Lisle, a 54-year-old manufacturer. They proved correct. Representative Nelson had the support of the powerful Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and that was the difference in the end although he needed three ballots to get the 40 votes necessary for nomination. Nelson led from the opening ballot and both he and Representative Lisle pulled strength from their two opponents after the first ballot, with Representative Mensing withdrawing after the second ballot. The vote:

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>1st Ballot</i>	<i>2nd Ballot</i>	<i>3rd Ballot</i>
Nelson .....	33	39	41
Lisle .....	20	27	31
Chalupa .....	12	8	4
Mensing .....	11	2	0

Only one ballot was needed to nominate a candidate for Speaker Pro Tempore. Representative Darrington, a 56-year-old farmer, with five sessions of service behind him, was nominated over Representatives Eugene Halling of Orient and Paul M. Walter of Union. The winner received 53 votes to 19 for Representative Walter and 4 for Representative Halling.

Hottest contest was for the post of majority leader, which required five ballots before Representative Robert W. Naden, 39, Webster City manufacturer, was declared elected. His an-



nounced opposition came from Representatives John L. Mowry, Marshalltown lawyer; Lester L. Kluever, Atlantic lawyer, and Hillman Sersland, Decorah businessman-farmer. A write-in candidate, Representative Mensing, received unsolicited support on the last three ballots and actually finished second on the deciding ballot. The vote:

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>1st Ballot</i>	<i>2nd Ballot</i>	<i>3rd Ballot</i>	<i>4th Ballot</i>	<i>5th Ballot</i>
Naden .....	25	32	36	39	40
Mowry .....	22	21	21	24	13
Kluever .....	20	18	15	0	0
Sersland .....	9	4	1	0	0
Mensing .....	0	0	3	12	22
	—	—	—	—	—
Totals.....	76	75	76	75	75

Representative Sersland withdrew after the second ballot but received a third ballot vote anyway. Representative Kluever withdrew after the third ballot. After the spirited battle for the top spot ended, Representative Mensing was chosen assistant majority leader by acclamation.

Four were not present at the caucus. Representatives William J. Coffman of North English and E. Wayne Shaw of Charles City were ill but sent proxy votes. These proxies did not cover all situations, which accounted for the differences in total vote on some of the five ballots for majority leader. The other absentees were Representatives-elect Roy J. Smith of Spirit Lake and H. E. Millen of Farmington.



Senate Republicans caucused on January 8, the day before the session started. They named Senator J. Kendall Lynes, 57, a farmer and veteran of 10 sessions, as their floor leader in a two-ballot contest behind closed doors. The tabulations of the two ballots were not announced but it was understood that Senator Lynes was opposed by Senator Robert R. Rigler of New Hampton. The retiring floor leader, Senator Jack Schroeder of Davenport, presided over the meeting. When it ended he told reporters that "when the tellers reached 18 votes (for Lynes) they stopped counting and that was it." Eighteen votes were required for a majority.

Senator Irving D. Long was nominated for President Pro Tempore, apparently without opposition. Senator Long, 63, a lawyer and former Mayor, was beginning his thirteenth year as a legislator.

Prior to the opening of the 1959 session, Senate Republicans had stripped incoming Lieutenant Governor McManus, a Democrat, of authority to appoint Senate standing committees inasmuch as they were in the majority. They vested this authority in a "committee on committees" composed of one Republican senator from each of the eight congressional districts.

With the newly-elected Lieutenant Governor in 1961 a member of their own party, Senate Republicans dispensed with the "committee on com-



mittees" at the January 8 pre-session caucus, thereby confirming an earlier statement by Lieutenant Governor-elect Mooty that he fully intended to appoint his own standing committees. He did appoint them shortly after taking office.

Democratic legislators held a joint pre-session caucus following a meeting with the party's state central committee on December 16, 1960. They discussed strategy and elected their leaders but did not put up candidates for President Pro Tempore of the Senate or for either Speaker or Speaker Pro Tempore of the House.

Re-elected House minority leader without opposition was Representative Scott Swisher, 41, Iowa City lawyer. A contest developed, though, for Senate minority leader after Senator George E. O'Malley of Des Moines, announced he would not seek re-election to this post which he had held for several sessions. The contest was decided by the narrowest of margins, 8 to 7, with Senator Andrew G. Frommelt of Dubuque, a 39-year-old salesman of insurance and real estate, nosing out Senator C. Joseph Coleman of Clare, a 38-year-old farmer.

Even though Democrats were in the minority, as usual, they took some consolation in reflecting on their legislative gains since 1953. This table shows their legislative gains since 1953. Their fortunes had reached a low ebb in 1953 when there were only three of their party in the House and only



four in the Senate. But only six years later they sent 48 to the House and 17 to the Senate. Now the tide was running the other way. This table shows the division of seats between the two parties since then:

Year	House		Senate		Total	
	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.
1953 .....	105	3	46	4	151	7
1955 .....	89	19	44	6	133	25
1957 .....	72	36	40	10	112	46
1959 .....	60	48	33	17	93	65
1961 .....	78	30	35	15	113	45

Organization of both chambers out of the way, members of each party looked forward to the messages of retiring Governor Loveless and Governor-elect Erbe as they turned to the serious business of law making.

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