

Significance of Work

With the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent sales tax rate the burning issue, House Republicans pressured Senate colleagues to appease the Governor by sending him a bill they thought he would accept. But non-compromisers among Senate Republicans rejected the House bill that would extend the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent rate for six months, and return to the general fund half of the 10 per cent sales tax revenue going into the road use tax fund.

Then these Senators pushed through the second conference committee their own bill, the one later vetoed by the Governor even though it included a "clincher" provision to force the Governor's acceptance. It provided that all treasury revenue in excess of a \$24,000,000 working balance on June 30, 1958, and June 30, 1959, should be distributed to public school districts on an average daily attendance basis, to relieve property taxes. Proponents publicly estimated the excess would range from \$5,000,000 to \$15,000,000, but privately expressed doubt there would be an excess.

Far from forcing Governor Loveless into signing the bill, the "clincher" provision alone furnished grounds enough for a veto, he said, even if the measure had not proposed giving new life to

the 2½ per cent rate. Distribution of any excess funds, he declared, would mean promotion of inefficient and uneconomical school districts, regardless of need, at a time when the legislature already had refused to increase existing school aids and had passed new reorganization laws to promote greater efficiency and economy.

After rejecting the tax bill, the Governor vetoed the capital appropriations measure to keep the budget in balance. He did it reluctantly, he said, in view of the compelling need for capital improvements at state schools.

Almost before the ink dried on his veto statement, the gnawing question became: "Will the Governor call a special session to enact new tax and capital appropriations bills?" Republicans favoring the 2½ per cent rate vowed to send him the same tax bill if he did. The Governor attested such a bill would suffer the same fate as the first. Thus, a deadlock developed that did not abate even after the Governor summoned leaders of both parties to a meeting on September 25 to discuss a special session. Some observers held that the Governor would be inviting political suicide to call a special session; others contended that the same fate awaited him if he refused to call one.

Additional stormy issues of the session included the matter of appointments. Republican Senators who had voted against some of Republican Governor Hoegh's appointments two years

previously, dealt similarly with a few made by a Democratic Governor, and they rejected four Loveless appointments. But after the legislature adjourned, the Governor followed Hoegh's lead and named three of the four to interim posts. They included Cecil Malone of Atlantic and Robert Brice of Waterloo, to the Highway Commission, and Irene Smith of Ottumwa to the Board of Social Welfare.

The legislature also rejected the Governor's plea for reapportionment, just as it had refused his two immediate Republican predecessors. Perhaps this continuing refusal to restore representative government to Iowa (fewer than one-third of the citizens now elect more than half of Iowa's legislators) was the most significant action (or inaction) by the 1957 Assembly.

Editors dealt at length with this subject as well as the legislature's overall record, and not all were big city editors, as charged by some law makers. Here are some comments:

There are many people in Iowa who believe in democracy and fair representation and they don't all live in the bigger population centers. *Iowa Falls Citizen*.

Reapportionment is coming because one of the basic theories of democracy is equal representation and the present representation in Iowa is anything but that. *Atlantic News-Telegraph*.

Nearly all who oppose (reapportionment) admit present representation is unfair. *Decorah Journal*.

We think the legislature should have done one thing

which it failed to do — and that is reapportionment. *Centerville Iowegian*.

The current session of the legislature is making the last one look good. The fault lies with the Republican members, collectively concerned with making Democratic Governor Herschel Loveless look bad and individually concerned with their own political future. . . . When after many weeks the list of what hasn't been accomplished . . . is longer than the list of essential accomplishments, the charge (that) there are no big thinkers in Iowa is given stature, at least in the House and Senate chambers. . . . *Albia Monroe County News*.

If the record was a bit on the barren side — and it was that — the people of Iowa have nobody but themselves to blame. This result was inevitable when they elected a Governor of one party and a legislature of the other. There could be and there was no leadership. *Mason City Globe-Gazette*.

Prevailing opinion is that it was a poor legislature, that it was devoid of the bold, imaginative, forward-looking leadership this state so desperately needs and somehow must acquire to keep pace . . . that status-quoers in influential positions must shoulder the blame; that it missed a real opportunity . . . to consider seriously the basic problems like reapportionment that must be solved before we can progress. . . . *Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

The Assembly's failures were not in what it did but what it did not do. . . . The most disturbing failure was the defeat of all proposals to bring about more fair representation . . . the record . . . is not good. It was an un-inspired session. *Des Moines Register*.

A Republican House and Senate and a Democratic Governor is a combination that isn't exactly conducive to easy and pleasant legislating, but they've co-existed pretty well at that. *Washington Journal*.

This session may have achieved the distinction of having made more people unhappy than any other session of recent times. . . . *Sioux City Journal-Tribune*.

Governor Loveless has gained greatly in prestige . . . the Republicans who voted for the 2½ per cent sales tax will almost certainly lose votes in 1958. Council Bluffs *Nonpareil*.

We are sympathetic to Governor Loveless in his desire to stick to his campaign commitments. We do wish, however, that his commitments had been less positive. The state DOES need the sales tax revenue. *Jefferson Herald*.

Unfortunately there was a segment of the legislature . . . that was headstrong and ruthless . . . it didn't propose to go along with Loveless in anything that could be escaped and its chief aim seemed to be to discredit the chief executive in the eyes of the public. . . . *Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*.

As far as the public is concerned, we believe there is nothing but impatience with the obviously political motivations of the Republican leadership. . . . It is ridiculous that the state should suffer just because Republicans want to make the Democrats look bad and vice versa. *Waterloo Courier*.

There was less statesmanship, less leadership, less devotion to the common good and more petty bickering, more political shenanigans and more head-in-the-sand voting. . . . Both parties lost prestige and respect. . . . *Clinton Herald*.

Of greater significance, perhaps, than the Loveless-Legislature controversy, was the continuing battle of philosophies within Republican ranks. The future complexion of Iowa politics may hinge on the outcome of this struggle. With neither side

apparently willing to give ground, Democrats believe their chances to win more political power in this normally Republican state will be the best in years in the 1958 election.

FRANK T. NYE

In Memoriam

On April 5, 1957 — two months and one day after his 75th birthday — death came to A. C. Gustafson, Chief Clerk of the Iowa House longer than any other individual. "Gus," as he was known affectionately, came to the House in 1907 from Page county as a committee clerk. He served as assistant Chief Clerk in 1909 and 1911, becoming Chief Clerk in 1913. In 1915-17 he was Executive Secretary to the late Governor Clarke. After two years away from politics he became Secretary of the Iowa Senate in 1919. But the House was his real love and he served as Chief Clerk again in 1921. Except for a six-year absence, when the Democrats were in power in the mid-30's, Republican "Gus" had been Chief Clerk ever since, undoubtedly accumulating more knowledge about the legislature than any other Iowan. When his death was announced the House passed a resolution praising him for "his faithful devotion to duty, his unselfish work," and for his long service record. Both House and Senate adjourned for the day.