

Organization of the Assembly

Despite heavy 1958 election losses, Republicans won enough seats to retain control of both houses in the 58th General Assembly. However, the situation differed in one respect from 1957. Instead of a Republican, the people had elected a Democrat, former Senator Edward J. McManus of Keokuk, as Lieutenant Governor and President of the Senate.

This posed a delicate problem for the Republican-controlled Senate. Custom called for the Lieutenant Governor to appoint Senate standing committees. Yet a bow to custom would have prevented Republicans from controlling committees which decide the fate of much legislation.

The 1937 Republican-controlled Senate, faced with the same problem, stripped another Democratic Lieutenant Governor of the appointive power and gave it to a "committee on committees" composed entirely of Republican Senators. The 1939 Republican-controlled Senate followed suit, even though the Lieutenant Governor that year was a Republican, in a move to make it appear that there had been nothing partisan in the 1937 action.

Now, twenty years later, history repeated itself. Some Republican senators, recalling that the previous actions had caused dissention within party ranks among those unhappy with committee assignments handed them by fellow Republicans, elected to work out a compromise with the incoming Lieutenant Governor this time. They wanted a voice in appointing committees in return for leaving the appointive authority in his hands.

Consequently, a Republican delegation of senators met with the Lieutenant Governor-Elect in Des Moines on December 7. He proposed that he be given authority to appoint a majority to five of the fifteen most important committees. The Republican delegation would not agree, nor could its members persuade Lieutenant Governor-Elect McManus to go along with their proposition. They so reported to a pre-legislative Republican Senate caucus in Des Moines on December 13. This caucus ratified the delegation's position and authorized appointment of a Republican committee on committees with power to make standing committee assignments.

The committee on committees included one Senator from each of the eight congressional districts as follows: First — Jack Schroeder of Davenport; Second — David O. Shaff of Clinton; Third — J. Kendall Lynes of Plainfield; Fourth — X. T. Prentis of Mount Ayr; Fifth — Carl Ringgenberg of Ames; Sixth — Guy G. Butler of Rolfe; Sev-

enth — Jim O. Henry of Carson; Eighth — J. T. Dykhouse of Rock Rapids.

It was decided that the two-to-one ratio existing between Republicans (33) and Democrats (17) in the Senate should be reflected on committees. Moreover, Democratic Senators were invited to select their own members for each committee.

However, Senate Democrats, caucusing December 18 in Des Moines, rejected the invitation. They said appointments should be made by the incoming Lieutenant Governor and, while they did not have the numerical strength to vote him the proper authority, they intended to entrust him with the task of assigning Democratic Senators to the various committees.

Meanwhile, at their December 13 caucus which was closed to the press, Republican Senators chose Senator Schroeder as majority leader. Serving his fifth session, Senator Schroeder was not only the youngest of the 50 senators, he was also believed to be the youngest Senate leader in Iowa history. Republicans also nominated Senator Lynes, a farmer serving his tenth session, for President Pro Tempore.

Senate Democrats did not elect a minority leader at their caucus, which was open to the press, but later they re-elected Senator George E. O'Malley, Des Moines attorney, to the post. He was beginning his sixth term.

House Republicans, caucusing December 13 at

the Hotel Kirkwood in Des Moines, wasted little time nominating Representative Vern Lisle, Clarinda manufacturer, starting his sixth term, as their candidate for Speaker.

He defeated Representative LeRoy Chalupa, Pleasant Plain merchant, 46 to 11 on the only ballot. Representatives Robert E. Maggert of Af-ton and Robert W. Naden of Webster City were not present for the vote, but the former made it as the first ballot for Speaker Pro Tempore got under way, and the latter arrived in time for the second and deciding ballot.

The race for Speaker Pro Tempore was among Representatives J. Henry Lucken, Akron farmer; Neil E. Johns, Toledo farmer, and Paul Walter, Union farmer. Representative John Mowry, Marshalltown attorney, received some votes though not a candidate. This added a touch of humor to the situation, since he was serving as a teller when the votes were counted.

With 31 votes needed for nomination, Representative Lucken won on the second ballot. The vote:

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>1st Ballot</i>	<i>2nd Ballot</i>
Lucken	24	31
Johns	22	20
Walter	8	4
Mowry	4	4

Republicans then elected Representative Clark

H. McNeal, Belmond real estate man and grain dealer, as majority leader. He defeated Representative A. L. Mensing, retired businessman from Lowden, 38 to 20. Representative Mowry, not a candidate, received one vote.

Representative Mensing then was elected unanimously as assistant floor leader, a new post created by the caucus.

In each case where balloting was necessary, losing candidates moved to make elections unanimous. This done, winners and losers joined in statements that harmony and togetherness were necessary if the party was to present a united front.

Representative Lisle thanked the caucus for voting him "the greatest honor of my life," and recalled that less than ten years ago there were only three Democrats among the 108 House members. He reminded colleagues that the division had narrowed each year, cautioning: "We will need the cooperation of all Republicans this time."

One more ballot was necessary. It had been generally assumed that the position of Chief Clerk of the House would go uncontested to William R. Kendrick, Des Moines public relations counsel, who had assisted the late Chief Clerk A. C. Gustafson for ten years and had completed the latter's term in 1957-1959. But a last-minute entry was former Representative Dewey E. Goode, sixty, Bloomfield produce dealer, who lost his bid for re-

election in 1958. Representative Lisle spoke for Goode, observing "there is a real need to have a parliamentarian who could keep us out of trouble" on the job of Chief Clerk. But despite his plea, Kendrick won the nomination handily, 43 to 16.

House Democrats caucused at the Hotel Savery in Des Moines on December 18 with Representative Merle W. Hagedorn, Royal farmer and 1957 leader, presiding. Representative Scott Swisher, Iowa City attorney, defeated Representative Howard C. Reppert, Jr., Des Moines transfer company president, for minority leader. Only one ballot was taken, and Representative Hagedorn, refusing the request of reporters to announce the result, declared Representative Swisher elected and, upon Representative Reppert's motion, elected unanimously.

Representative Swisher promised to do "everything I can to get the Governor's program and the Democratic program through the House." He announced plans to form "a so-called board of directors" to work with him "to go over the Governor's program, to promote it and to put it through."

Governor Loveless appeared briefly to congratulate Democrats on their success at the polls. He reminded each that "your obligation is not to any one select group but to every individual in your county."

With pre-session formalities ended, it was only

a matter of awaiting the fall of the gavels to start the session. In the House the gavel fell at 10 a.m. on January 12. It was wielded by Representative Reppert, senior member from Polk County. After opening ceremonies, which included the election of Kendrick as acting Chief Clerk, Representative Mensing took over as Temporary Speaker.

When members were sworn in, Representative George Paul of Brooklyn nominated Representative Lisle for Speaker. The nomination was seconded by Representative Neal Pierce for the Republicans, and Representative Swisher for the Democrats, who did not put up a candidate. Representative Lisle was elected unanimously and immediately took the oath. Within minutes he electrified the House by breaking a long-time precedent. He appointed standing committees. It was the first time it ever had been done, to anyone's knowledge, on opening day. It got the session off to a fast start.

In the Senate, retiring Lieutenant Governor William H. Nicholas of Mason City, rapped members to order at 10:10 a.m. During opening ceremonies, Speaker Lynes was elected unanimously as President Pro Tempore after adoption of temporary rules which included one important change — committee meetings would be open to newsmen.

Notice of five election contests were filed on opening day. In the Senate former Representative

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Blythe C. Conn, Burlington Republican, brought a contest for the seat of Senator Carl Hoschek, Burlington Democrat. House contests were brought by: George Good, Newhall Democrat, for the seat of Representative Jack Milroy, Vinton Republican; former Representative T. J. Frey, Neola Republican, for the seat of either Representative Jack Rooney or Representative Gilbert E. Klefstad, both Council Bluffs Democrats; Cecil V. Lutz, Osceola Republican, for the seat of Representative Stanley Watts, Murray Democrat; and Clarence E. Lohff, Holstein Democrat, for the seat of Representative Bert Fairchild, Ida Grove Republican.

By mid-session all contests were decided in favor of the incumbents excepting Representative Watts who was unseated by Contestant Lutz, changing the party division from 59-49 to 60-48 for the Republicans. This table shows the division for the last four sessions:

	<i>House</i>		<i>Senate</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Rep.</i>	<i>Dem.</i>	<i>Rep.</i>	<i>Dem.</i>	<i>Rep.</i>	<i>Dem.</i>
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

In six years Democrats had gained fifty-eight seats.

FRANK T. NYE