

May 5, 1981

LB 209

you have to look at is the last election where Iowa used the caucus system and Iowa had 250,000 people involved in those caucuses. That is 250,000 people who are dedicated to either one party or the other, 250,000 people who will pound stakes and signs and 250,000 people who will probably contribute, 250,000 people deeply involved in the political parties and I submit to you when you run in Nebraska and you file a statement to some time in April and you run in May, many people forget that you can file to be a delegate and so as a result the parties then fill those seats whether or not filed and most of the time there is no opposition for those who do file. It is a procedure. I submit Iowa is not a bad state to look at. So wouldn't it be nice if we and Iowa would have our caucuses at the same time in terms of presidential candidates and how we select our delegates. If you are really interested in a deep folklore of history, we used to use caucuses frequently in terms of our political systems, the old town hall meetings. The first time I was ever elected to the City Council of Ralston it was by a caucus. That is how I was nominated and then ran in election and won. I don't think caucuses are outdated under certain kinds of conditions. I am amazed though when I bring this bill before the committees and I have had it here three times. Once it got to the floor and the only people who really oppose it primarily are the two political parties because they have to make some changes and I submit to you, does this Legislature legislate for the parties or do we legislate for the people of the State of Nebraska. I also submit to you that lengthy campaigns are turning people off, absolutely turned off. I don't know how you campaign but one of the questions I have always campaigned on when I would campaign is, how do you like our process, our system of election? The people very candidly tell you, we can't take all that propaganda. We get sick of it. You wonder why we don't participate. You wonder why we have empathy. That is the reason. We get tired of tarring on television and all we see is candidates making promises and seldom a commitment. They write platforms and planks and those planks become warped the day after they are elected. Not only that, but it gives you a chance to run two different campaigns, one early, and then when you see your position is not quite the way it should be you can change your position and go clear around the other way. Not only that, but you have lame ducks many times that parade across the great halls like this who can enact certain kinds of laws not in the best interest of people, both locally and at state levels. Now then, it is obvious that this body is not very receptive to this piece of legislation but I think you should think about it seriously because there is always another way to get the vote to the people. That is a con-

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