

May 5, 1981

LB 209

SENATOR CLARK: Wait until I get my legal counsel here. I am afraid I will have to rule that it is not germane. You are amending Chapter 31 while Senator Koch is amending Chapter 33, 32. So I will rule that it is not germane. Any other motions? Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Since it is not germane, and I will accept that. It was a nice try. I figured we would use this bill for something useful as opposed to what it is. Then I think Senator Haberman would like to go ahead with his kill motion if we withdraw this and allow the kill motion.

SENATOR CLARK: We have a motion ahead of that.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next motion I have is an amendment by Senator Hoagland to strike Section 17 of the bill.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President, and colleagues, let me say at the outset that I am a strong supporter of the basic concept of this bill to move the primary from May to September and what this amendment is designed to do is to begin the process of cleaning the bill up so that the bill will deal only with that concept as the committee had originally intended. Now what my amendment does is it strikes the open primary provisions of LB 209 and let me just state in one sentence why I think an open primary idea is a bad idea. In an open primary idea you will recall is a system whereby somebody who is registered as an independent can go to the polls and can request a ballot from either the Republican Party or the Democratic Party and then vote that ballot. Now I think that is a bad idea for a very simple reason. If you are a Methodist, I don't think you would want the Lutherans coming in and telling you who your minister ought to be and I think if you are a democrat, you don't want the independents coming in and telling you who your party candidate is going to be. If you are a republican, the same applies. Now over the last forty or fifty years we have seen a steady erosion in the general political power of the parties in this country. Now I think we all lament that fact. I think all of us feel that our political system would work better if the parties have more strength than they have right now and I think that the whole open primary concept which has been in effect in the State of Illinois for many, many years now is just another chink in the armor. It is just something else that ultimately weakens our party system. Now, as I indicated before, I am a very strong believer in moving the primary in Nebraska from May back to September for a whole variety of reasons. I think it really