

May 5, 1981

LB 209

Senator or Congressman Bereuter. Congressman Bereuter, and I will quote, "I noted in a December 24 article which stated that you intended to place the primary election in September. As you undoubtedly are aware, Nebraska has one of the earliest primaries. I think there is wide support among knowledgeable citizens in Nebraska for moving towards a late primary. I have heard a great many complaints about the political process and suggestions for moving the primary closer to the general election. Additionally without question, the wide separation between the two elections cause expenditure of additional funds. The whole process must be geared up twice. Finally, it is a particularly difficult situation now for those of us who face reelection every two years with the primary coming long before we adjourn. Many of my House colleagues express sympathy for we Nebraskans who have one of the earliest primary elections in the nation. From my experience and knowledge of the situation, Kansas, for example, I think they manage quite well with a September primary." That is an endorsement from Congressman Bereuter, one of my colleagues in the Republican party. Now then, as I said before, this bill I think has caused some people to make hasty decisions. Sure, I know that both parties do not particularly have a sympathetic point of view for it but I also know that there are many people who belong to both the Democrat and Republican parties do have and I submit to you that the two parties can select their own rules by which they elect their delegates. They can either do it by caucus or by other ways in which other states have done it in the past. Now then, there is an old quote that comes from Marco Grouch. What's his name, Dick? One of the famous Marx brothers. But anyway, this is what he said and I think it is rather amusing. "Politics is the honor of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, and diagnosing it incorrectly and applying all the wrong remedies." And I think that is about what we are trying to do here. We realize that the people by and large have in large numbers gotten out of politics, and one of the reasons they tell me is because they just plain get tired of it being carried on for such a length of time. If you want to talk about economics, as I said earlier in my remarks, the economics will also be beneficial to candidates. Not only that, there is some people who think the incumbent has an advantage if you go to the Fall primary. I submit to you the last election of the State of Nebraska did not particularly show that incumbents had great advantages. The races were difficult. And I also will submit to you that anyone who wants to be so political can use this position in the Legislature to begin their campaign from January on and offer a steady barrage of bills, resolutions and other kinds of things for public consumptions.

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