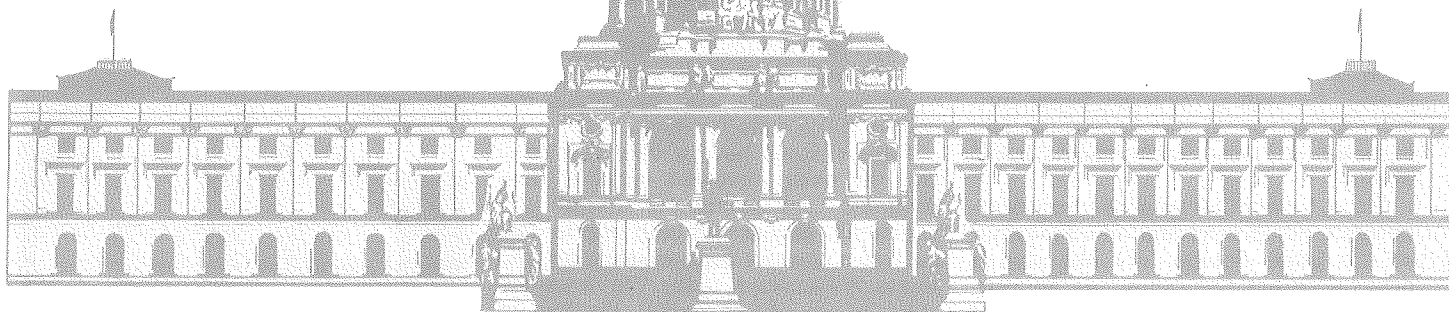


SENATE PERSPECTIVE '75



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VOL. 1, NO. 2

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SENATE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Move To Community Facilities Urged

State Institutional Closing Plan Studied

The fate of several of Minnesota's state institutions more than likely will be decided this Session.

A special Senate subcommittee chaired by Senator George Perpich is, in fact, prepared to recommend a timetable for closings once funding for community-based operations is realized. The question now, however, is whether the Senate will buy the \$245 million figure needed to begin phasing out some of the state's mental health care and correctional facilities over the next five-year period.

Among the many recommendations considered by the subcommittee, most likely targets for closing include Stillwater State Prison and State Hospitals located in Hastings, Anoka, St. Peter and Fergus Falls.

A select committee composed of ten legislators and eight citizens said in a report issued last December that the state should fund community-based correctional programs for all but the most serious offenders. The report recommends that all eight existing institutions be replaced by the early 1980's with smaller facilities, and that inmates now at Stillwater be moved to St. Cloud Reformatory, the youth training centers at both Lino Lakes and Red Wing, and the women's facility at Shakopee.

Minnesota Corrections Commissioner, Kenneth Schoen, while supporting the committee's finding, has raised questions about closing Stillwater by July 1, 1977, the target date established by the select committee.

"I agree that Stillwater should be the first institution closed," he says, "but St. Cloud cannot be made the state's major correctional facility for any length

of time. St. Cloud has many of the same problems as Stillwater. It's an old fortress prison and very difficult to control and manage."

Schoen believes that eventually both Stillwater and St. Cloud facilities should be closed and a new facility built in the metropolitan area.

The Department of Welfare has also recommended closing dates for Hastings

State Hospital by October 1, 1975, Fergus Falls State Hospital by July 1, 1977, and Anoka and St. Peter State Hospitals by July 1, 1980.

Senator George Conzemius, Chairman of the Health, Welfare and Corrections Committee, is leery of a request for \$64.3 million this year as a "start-up cost", and has said that there is little chance the Legislature will appropriate that much money this session.

In an interview last month, he predicted that "we probably would fund one or two pilot projects as we did for the corrections department, but not embark upon wholesale funding."

Another consideration expressed by Loring W. McAllister, Assistant Welfare Commissioner, is the possibility of moving ahead too quickly, phasing out existing institutions before replacement facilities are available. Pointing to mistakes in California and New York where state institutions were closed before community-based operations became functional, he states that the Department of Welfare must make sure that no patient is released to a community setting until "the necessary array of services is in place."

Central to the closings study is a plan to move some 700 inmates yearly to community-based operations. Governor Anderson has recommended that 700 of the state's 3600 mentally retarded and 100 chemically dependent and mentally ill persons be transferred to community facilities.

Although time is growing short if a decision is to be made this year, Perpich plans to continue hearings until all interested parties have testified.

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Senate President Outlines Future Priorities

Minnesota State Senator Alec Olson can't remember a time when he hasn't been interested in public affairs.

"I can recall discussions at the dinner table, at lunch, or in a thrashing crew break," he states, "at really being concerned about what was happening and participating in discussions about current affairs."

Olson, former Congressman from Minnesota's 6th District and now President of the State Senate, did not plan a political career but rather, as he candidly states, found himself in "the right place at the right time."

First elected as a DFL precinct officer in Kandiyohi County, Olson soon became county chairman and then district chairman.

"I remember very well working in the family room," he says, "listening to the radio and hearing about then Congressman Fred Marshall's announcement that he was not going to seek re-election in our newly formed Congressional district. And I went up and had a cup of coffee with my wife and said, 'You know, we've been enjoying and participating in party organization politics. Maybe this is the time to consider whether or not we should be actively participating in holding office.'"

Olson went on to win the congressional election in 1962 and served in Washington for four years before returning to Minnesota in 1967.

Alec Olson is an optimist. He describes politics, for instance, as the art of the possible. He approaches decision-making cautiously because he believes that often much time is wasted pursuing avenues that are not amenable to change or implementation.

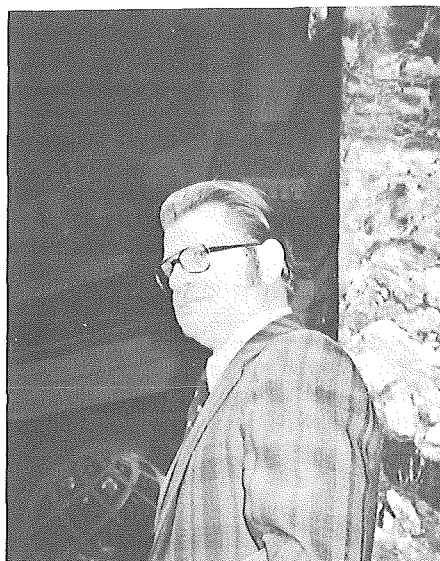
"When that happens, then I say let's approach this problem from another direction. If the purpose is laudable, if its one we want to reach, then I find that purpose is bound to have enough appeal, enough logic and understanding, so that people will join in the effort if I only can find the right way to present it."

"So many times," he continues, "I have approached my colleagues on the basis that our problems are really very common. What household in this country houses families that don't want good education for their children, a good home to live in, good food on the table, concern about our senior citizens, concern about our retirements? But, in essence, we do recognize what can pull us together rather than drive us apart. We have everything in common and very little that we can't ultimately agree upon

as far as purpose and being. We do argue, though, about the best way to get there."

Olson believes that Minnesota government is both progressive and responsive to people's needs, and he credits the people of the state for its success.

"Minnesotans have a very rich heritage of being involved in their own destinies," he points out. "From the beginning, people had built-in priorities such as a need for quality education, and this is still a priority today. We're a small state where people gather together to talk about problems and take actions which lead to positive results."



Alec Olson
President, Minnesota Senate

Minnesota, like every other state, however, is not without its problems.

One area Olson sees needing improvement is transportation. He believes that roads have been constructed haphazardly with no real planning scheme behind their construction.

"We just built roads where we thought they might go in the future," he states. And the history of transportation shows that people settle where transportation opportunities are available. In our suburban areas we have not designed transportation facilities to allow people to live where they might like to. We simply built roads around our metro areas, not roads that connected them to where commerce might originate, where people might want to live and play. I think that's been very detrimental and very much hindsighted on our part. As we look ahead now we should identify mistakes such as these and work to do something about them."



Certainly related to the transportation problem, Olson is concerned about energy waste. But he looks at the problem in some unique ways, one of them government-related. He feels, for instance, government services should be disbursed or decentralized.

"We don't have to require so many automobile trips if we put some of the functions of government closer to the point of action."

For instance he is not convinced that the Department of Agriculture should be located in St. Paul. Basically, Olson looks critically at the centralization of government in the metro area. He is quick to point out that he doesn't communicate, whether it is across the street or up on the iron range, by driving his car to make a personal appearance.

"I lift the telephone and place a call — there's no time lag, no delay."

He also voices concern over the number of public agencies, many which function separately to accomplish the same purposes.

"I can't help but wonder how much manpower and how much financing is required to maintain all these separate entities all working to do the same type of thing," he says. I surely don't want to preclude anybody getting into the act towards accomplishing a valid goal, but at least we could have a community chest approach rather than everybody going off in their own direction."

It is Olson's view that restructuring would lend itself to more efficiency in a number of areas including health care, social services and educational supports.

At the same time he believes that change must be accompanied by identifying responsibilities in order that costs of programs and changes are made available to restructure and replace current efforts. In health care, for instance, he sees a problem of moving too quickly to close state institutions before adequately financing and staffing community-based programs.

(continued on page 12)

Frederick Proposes Gasoline Tax Now



Mel Frederick converses with fellow Republican Mel Hansen at committee meeting.



When Senate Minority Whip Mel Frederick looks to the Senate, he lists the amount of time lawmakers spend at the Capitol each year as one of his main concerns. And Frederick, who represents District 32, is not convinced that the hours legislators work in St. Paul are always used to their best advantage.

"I think we could accomplish much more in a shorter span of time by better allocating our priorities," he states. And this requires discipline, not only on the part of committee chairmen regarding the bills they schedule for hearing, but also an individual discipline on the part of each legislator to not introduce more or less capricious bills that just take up what time we have."

Frederick sees this problem as one that most Senators consider when deciding whether or not they will be able to continue to serve in the Senate. He also thinks it is central to the question of a part-time or full-time Legislature and whether lawmakers should receive an increase in pay.

"It is a very difficult question," he says, "because we are all in different positions. I can make a living back home but a Senator who is here more or less full time now might tend to favor a full time Legislature. When it comes to pay, you really can't peg any figure and say, 'this is sufficient for a legislator' because we all represent varied backgrounds and different needs."

Frederick's personal view is that the Legislature can function more than adequately within the present time framework meeting in annual Sessions, not over 120 days in a two year period.

"At the present time we are relying on department heads to, in reality, run the state. Now, if you go to a full-time Legislature and still permit them to run the state, we haven't done anything but increase the time the Legislature is in Session."

He supports this position stating that a full-time Legislature would make lawmakers, in effect, function as a Board of Directors making all decisions with less need for administrators.

"And if we just expand the time the Legislature meets," he says, "we'll end up with a load of unnecessary bills."

Frederick believes that any move to prohibit people from serving in the Senate because of occupational background or age would be a mistake. He is especially critical of a bill recently introduced in the House which would deny membership to attorneys.

"I think that varied occupations in the makeup of the Senate is one of the things that make the Minnesota Legislature not only one of the greatest but one of the most upright. And anytime you realize a concentration of power in one or two occupational groups, you are going to see corruption."

He is also concerned that people do not fully understand the amount of cooperation and bipartisan effort that goes into much of the legislation passed out of the Senate each Session.

"Because many people are still not that interested," he says, "it is tough for legislators to find out what they really want. Quite often you end up listening to a few vocal minorities. When we debate issues people tend to say, 'it's just politics', not realizing that both democrats and republicans work closely on much legislation."

Concerning specific legislation this Session, Frederick, along with fellow Republican, Richard Fitzsimons, is proposing a one-cent per gallon increase in the state gas tax, shifting the cost of the state Highway Patrol to the general fund, and using half of the revenue generated by the motor vehicle sales tax to construct outstate highways.

Frederick opposes the 2¢ gas hike presently under consideration by the

Senate Transportation Committee because "it offers only a piecemeal approach to the problem of funding road construction in the state."

"Under our plan," Frederick states, "we estimate the gas tax increase will raise about \$20 million annually, while shifting the cost of the Highway Patrol will save about \$23 million. Also, if we take half of the \$50 million raised annually by the motor vehicle tax from the general fund and put it in the highway building fund, it will add \$25 million for further building of highways. Most important, though, my proposal saves between 20 and 30 thousand jobs for people throughout the state."

Although Frederick's bill is not yet scheduled for a hearing, he doesn't consider his opposition to the 2¢ gas tax bill as merely a "negative" response to the problem.

"I look at it this way. We have a good, viable proposal and I'm supporting it. And I should. I'm fighting to see that it is the one that wins out."

Although Frederick is not sure what course the Senate will take regarding taxes this year, he does feel that the state should begin conducting its business more like a family operating on a prescribed budget.

"You have to look at the available dollars you have and then pick your priorities for spending. And traditionally," he states, "it's always been the reverse. We tend to select our priorities and then, like this year when we overestimated, look around for ways to spend it. I just don't buy that concept."

Frederick also feels strongly that current gun control proposals will not solve the crime problem. He points to states which have tough gun control laws but yet, in comparison to Minnesota, boast higher crime rates per 100,000 people.

"And some of those statistics show that it is not the gun control laws we have that determine violence. It seems to be concentrations of people; and the more heavily concentrated areas have a higher crime rate than the less concentrated areas."

Whether it is gun control, taxes or any of a host of other issues, Frederick is quick to point out that his position as "Minority Whip" is basically to keep communication lines open.

"Some people think you're there to 'whip' people in line or to round up votes under pressure, but that's a false impression. All I attempt to do is monitor specific things coming up for our consideration and then notify members of our caucus — but there's no pressure to vote one way or another. And there shouldn't be."

SENATE COMMITTEE CORNER

Although most people know that the bulk of legislative work is accomplished in committee, many questions are asked about how each committee functions in the legislative process. How many subcommittees work in conjunction with standing committees? What types of bills come before each committee? Who are the committee chairmen? You will find the answers to some of these questions in the summary below in addition to important areas of interest now or soon to be considered by your Senate committees.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Jerome Hughes)



Subcommittees:

School Finance; Educational Organization; Assessments and Accountability; Post-Secondary and Higher Education Planning and Coordination; School Boards and Administration; Teacher Preparation Standards and Certification; Special Education in State Institutions

In addition to considering a host of bills this year, the education committee is looking to the future of state education. Central to the concerns of this committee are problems of declining enrollments, higher educational costs, and present levy limits accorded school districts.

Committee chairman, Jerome Hughes, has formed an ad hoc committee which meets Thursday evenings to discuss future trends in education. Representatives of the Minnesota Education Association (MEA) meet with Senators to exchange views on such matters as population patterns, migration trends, school financing and new programs.

Regularly scheduled meetings are held in Room 110 at the Capitol from 10:00 to 12:00 Mondays and Wednesdays.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Norbert Arnold)



Subcommittees:

Education; Welfare-Corrections; State Departments I; State Departments II; State Departments III and Semi-State Affairs; Claims

Chaired by Senator Norbert Arnold, the Finance committee is responsible for appropriating monies needed to finance legislation passed out of Senate committees. After a bill passes committee, it is sent on to Finance for approval. Bills may also be returned to committee with recommendations for re-financing or sent directly to the floor for debate.

Thus far, the Finance committee has approved funding for a \$5 million veterans bonus bill (also passed by the full Senate) and an interim claims bill relating to personal liability claims throughout the state. Full committee meetings are held on Mondays and Wednesdays in Room 120 at the Capitol from 2:00-4:00 P.M.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATION COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Edward Gearty)



Subcommittees:

Government Structure; State Boards and Commissions; State Employees; Pensions and Retirement

Essentially, the Governmental Operations committee considers legislation to reorganize or restructure state government, in an attempt to realize greater efficiency. To date, the committee has acted on several bills relating to state boards and commissions, voting to abolish any inactive boards while transferring their functions and standardizing procedures. The committee also acted favorably on a controversial veterans preference which was passed by the full Senate.

The committee, chaired by Edward Gearty, is also scheduled to study an administrative procedures act and a bill on procedures relating to state employees.

Meetings are held in Room 112 from 8:00-10:00 A.M. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

HEALTH, WELFARE AND CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator George Conzemius)



Subcommittees:

Health; Corrections; Welfare; Adult Corrections; Special Subcommittee on Institutional Closings; Corrections/Secure Mental Health

One of the busiest committees, Health, Welfare and Corrections is chaired by George Conzemius. Among the many health-care measures presently under study is legislation which would provide catastrophic health insurance for citizens of the state. Currently, a special subcommittee is studying the possibility of closing several of the state's correctional and health care facilities (see story, p. 1).

The committee also plans to hear a number of bills related to human services, community health services and child abuse. A bill to allow pharmacists to substitute generic drugs has already passed and is scheduled for Senate action.

The committee meets in Room 112 at the Capitol on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Jack Davies)



Subcommittees:

Judicial Administration; Public Law Reform; Private Law Reform; Criminal Law and Corrections; Privacy; Revisor's Bill

The Judiciary committee, which is chaired by Jack Davies, meets each Tuesday and Thursday at 2:00 P.M. in Room 118 at the Capitol to consider legislation pertaining to the laws of our state. Major topics scheduled for this Session include another attempt to pass some form of gun control legislation, guardianship of mentally retarded adults and revision of the laws relating to alcohol-impaired drivers.

At present, the committee is holding hearings on the Probate System Reform law passed in the 1974 Session.

LABOR AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Baldy Hansen)



Subcommittees:

Commerce and Insurance; Labor; Regulated Industries;

The responsibility for legislation in the areas of business, industry, banking, etc. rests with the Labor and Commerce Committee chaired by Senator Baldy Hansen. The committee also must keep abreast of new Federal laws in these areas. Examples include the quick passage of two unemployment compensation bills early this Session which provided Minnesota with additional federal funds for the unemployed.

The committee expects to hear several bills soon dealing with transfer of the electric fund and usury limits.

Regularly scheduled meetings are held in Room 112 at the Capitol on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10:00-12:00 P.M.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Roger Moe)



Subcommittees:

Agriculture; Game and Fish; Public Lands; Water Resources; Environmental Protection;

Several controversial bills are expected to come before the Natural Resources and Agriculture committee in the next months. Foremost, is another returnable container bill similar to that which failed to win support last Session. The committee also expects to act on a bill which would mandate the recycling of automobile parts and tires, and a bill to formulate state drainage policy.

The Natural Resources Committee is chaired by Roger Moe, and meets each Monday and Wednesday at 8:00 A.M. in Room 118 at the Capitol.

RULES AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Nicholas Coleman)



Subcommittees:

Constitutional Amendments; Interim Commissions; Permanent Rules; Revisor's Subcommittee; Joint Rule 20; Re-Referrals; Staffing

Chaired by Senate Majority Leader Nicholas Coleman, the Rules and Administration Committee is responsible for guiding the orderly consideration of Senate business and overseeing the internal operation of the Senate. One of its first responsibilities is to consider and recommend to the Senate the temporary and permanent rules under which the Senate will operate, including the establishment of committees, procedures for consideration of bills and authorization for employment of the necessary personnel. When that task is completed, the committee meets as required in order to resolve jurisdictional disputes among committees, consider personnel matters, and, when time is running out for consideration of bills on the floor, to determine the order of priority in which bills will be heard. Although scheduled to meet on Thursdays at 8:00 in Room 118, the committee often meets on call of the chairman.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Alec Olson)



Subcommittees: none

The Local Government committee is concerned with the structure and organization of local units in addition to the powers and duties of individual officers in cities, towns, and counties throughout the state.

Legislation to permit local governments to compensate county commissioners and other officers has already passed the Senate. The committee, chaired by Alec Olson, is also looking at legislation to eliminate obsolete laws and a recodification of municipal laws. Looking to the future, committee members are studying a proposal which would allow local governments several options in setting up their government structure.

Committee meetings are held from 8:00 to 10:00 A.M. Tuesdays and Fridays in Room 118 at the Capitol.

METROPOLITAN AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator John Chenoweth)



Subcommittees:

Operations and Structure; Land Use and Physical Development; Metropolitan Governments

This year the Metropolitan and Urban Affairs committee plans to tackle a number of significant environmental, social and development questions.

Thus far the committee has turned its attention to the Metropolitan Transit Commission including long-range mass transit proposals and bus financing. Also set for consideration is the question of metropolitan growth and how to ensure the area's sound development.

Chaired by John Chenoweth, the committee meets each Tuesday and Friday from 10:00 to 12:00 in Room 118 at the Capitol.

TAXES AND TAX LAWS COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Tony Perpich)



Subcommittees: none

The Taxes and Tax Laws Committee meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:00 to 4:00 in Room 15 at the Capitol. Essentially, the committee works in two areas — revenue raising and amending or repealing existing tax statutes.

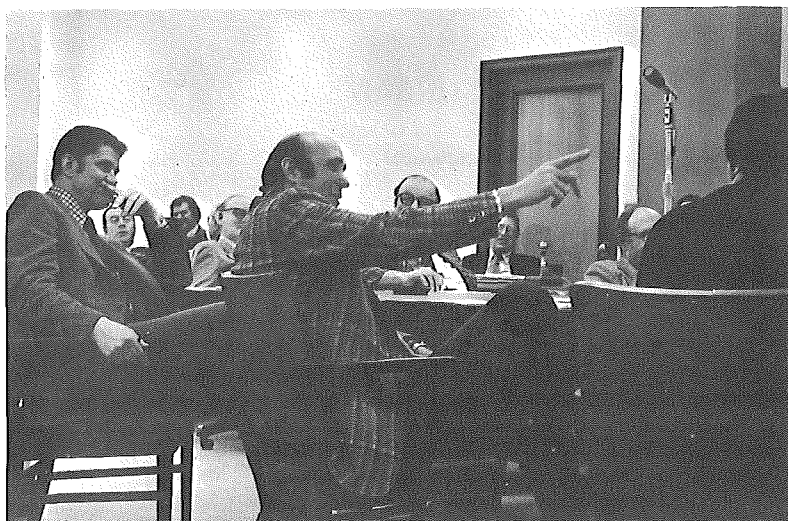
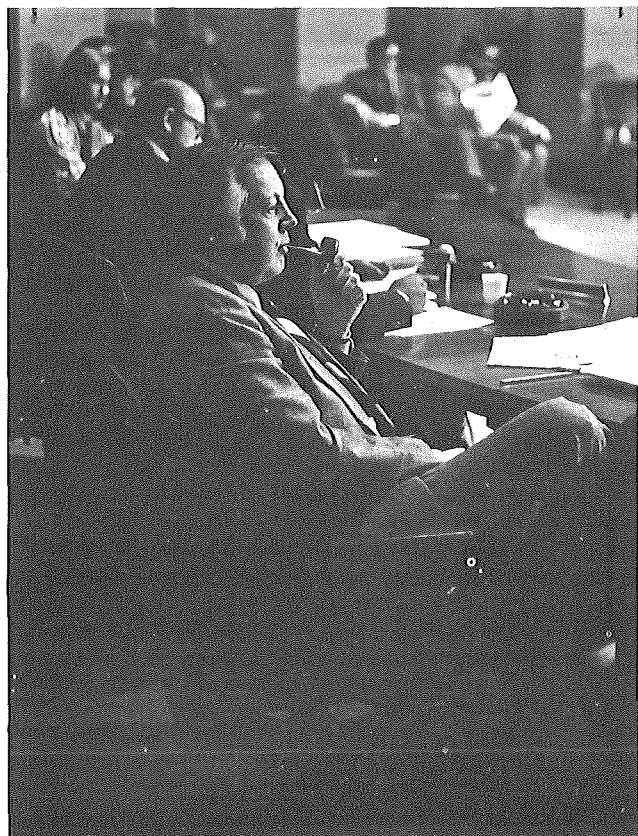
At present the committee is studying a Sales and Use Tax Omnibus bill; the 1974 Pension Plan bill and Retroactive Pension Reform Bill; a Research and Planning Omnibus proposal and an Income Tax Omnibus bill. Tony Perpich serves as the committee chairman.

(continued on page 12)

Session '75 Steps Up PACE



Before a Metropolitan and Urban Affairs committee meeting, left to right: Senators David Schaaf, Hubert Humphrey, III, Robert North, Eugene Stokowski; James Dinerstein (legal counsel); Sen. John Chenoweth.



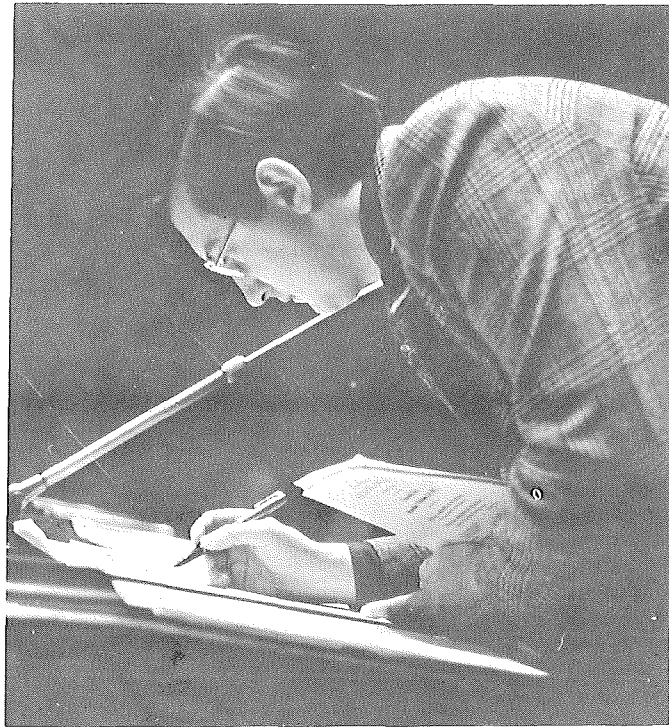
Above:
Sen. Robert Dunn and Sen. John Bernhagen

Left:
Contemplating testimony at a Metro and Urban Affairs meeting is Sen. Robert Stassen.



Above:
Intent in his duties, Otto Haase is one of the Senate's Sergeants-at-Arms.

Below:
A Senate page and legal counsel follow testimony with Senators Gerald Willet John Chenoweth, and Tony Perpich.



Above:
Secretary of the Senate Patrick Flahaven checks the day's calendar before a Senate session.

Below:
Senators Gene Merriam and Jerome Blatz in committee.



Coleman Urges Support For Handgun Legislation

by Nicholas Coleman
Senate Majority Leader

The opening of Senate hearings on my new handgun control bill two weeks ago made it clear to me how much things concerning this old issue have changed.

Support from law enforcement officers has grown a great deal. The facts increasingly show the need for handgun control. Polls indicate broad citizen support. More people than ever before are informed on the issue, and we have made changes in the bill itself to satisfy critics.

I was particularly encouraged by the statement of Daryl Plath, Hastings police chief and president of the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association. He testified: "I strongly support the bill. I do a lot of hunting. I do a lot of competitive pistol shooting. I'm a member of the NRA, and I don't feel that this kind of a bill will in any way infringe or jeopardize those kind of activities that I want to pursue."

The results of a recently completed study of gunshot deaths in Minnesota were mentioned at the hearing. The study, which is the closest look yet at gunshot deaths in any state, shows that more than 90 percent of gunshot deaths are caused by people who my bill seeks to keep away from handguns. The detailed analysis of homicides and suicides in Minnesota for 1972 through 1974 showed very significant correlations between drugs, alcohol, mental illness, juveniles and prior criminal activity of handgun assailants and suicide victims.

In addition, the hearing brought out the results of a recent poll which indicates that two out of every three Minnesotans support stricter control of handgun purchases. The poll shows that a great majority of citizens in all parts of the state and in all walks of life favor tighter controls.

It is clear from the hearing that because more and more citizens are becoming informed on the issue of handgun control, it is less possible for opponents to distort the issue and misrepresent the bill. Fortunately, the hearing was characterized by less emotion than in the past. In addition, we have made many changes in the bill to make it as good a piece of legislation as possible.

The bill requires checks of the purchasers and carriers of handguns. It prohibits criminals, untrained minors, and people with alcohol, drug, or mental problems from possessing handguns. The bill also requires a 14-day waiting period before purchase of a handgun.

As in the past, the bill does not affect rifles or shotguns in any way. Present owners of handguns do not need to register them. The bill does not require hunters and target shooters to get permits.

In addition, we have made a very important change in the bill since last year, which I believe will help more legislators support the bill. It authorizes the local law enforcement officer who issues the permit to waive the waiting

period for purchasers if he wishes.

The Senate hearing did show me how much things have changed on the issue of handgun control. But it also showed that one thing remains unchanged: handgun control will save lives in Minnesota with little or no inconvenience to law-abiding citizens and at a minimal cost.

The bill is a modest and reasonable proposal whose time has come.



KTCA Begins TV Coverage

In an effort to expand television coverage of the State Legislature, KTCA-TV, Channel 2, is now offering a series of interesting and informative half-hour programs each Thursday evening at 8:00 P.M.

Broadcasts originate from Room 4 at the State Capitol and are usually videotaped the same Thursday they are aired. Bill E. Hopkins of KTCA moderates the programs which have thus far highlighted discussions on unemployment, agricultural land usage, institutional closings and education.

Future topics planned for weekly broadcasts include mass transit, adult corrections, highway construction, consumer protection, Minnesota's educational institutions and state boards and taxes.

KTCA has also announced plans to increase coverage later this Session to include important committee hearings and floor debates. Check local T.V. listings weekly for scheduling information. Advanced program information is also available by calling KTCA at 645-0471.

Tennesen Appointed To Federal Commission

State Senator Robert J. Tennesen has been appointed to the Privacy Protection Study Commission by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana. The Privacy Protection Study Commission, created by Federal Law in late 1974, consists of seven members, three of whom are appointed by President Ford, two by Speaker Albert, and two by Majority Leader Mansfield.

"The work of this Commission will be vital in determining methods to protect the privacy and integrity of individual citizens," Tennesen says. "The recently publicized allegations and admissions of governmental intrusion into citizens' private lives clearly points out the need for this study."

Tennesen who says he feels very honored to be selected for work on this important Commission, also stated that the Commission is required by law to "make a study of the data banks, automated data processing programs, and information systems of governmental, regional and private organizations, in order to determine the standards and procedures enforced for the protection of personal information." Further, the Commission must study the use of Social Security numbers, universal identifiers and other symbols used to identify individuals and make recommendations to Congress for necessary legislation to protect the privacy of our citizens.

Tennesen was the chief author of the 1974 Minnesota Act to protect Minnesota citizens from intrusion into their private lives by state and local government. That act was the first of its kind in the nation, making Minnesota again a leader in another important field. In December Tennesen attended the White House Domestic Affairs Council Committee on Privacy to participate in a two-day seminar on privacy.

Perspective **The Role of the Minority**

by Senator John Keefe

While the victorious Democratic majority in the Legislature last November was gleefully anticipating the question of "Where to next?" after its landslide, we in the minority were glumly wondering "What do we do now?"

It was an unpleasant question for us to ponder. Outside of shouting "Wait til '76" (and meaning it) there seemed little we could do to better ourselves. Outnumbered 103-31 in the House and 38-29 in the Senate, our programs would stand little chance of passage.

And on top of that, it was simply a miserable time to be an elected official . . . even in a majority party, let alone a minority.

Widespread disillusionment over Vietnam and the Watergate crimes serves to create a pervasive skepticism about the pronouncements of the mighty, a new impatience with politics as usual, and an eagerness to challenge practices that were once blinked at.

It was indeed a tough period for all of us. I am sure more than one politician found himself sympathizing with Satan in Milton's "Paradise Lost" who hears "On all sides, from innumerable tongues, a dismal universal hiss, the sound of public scorn."

But from a perspective of four months later, I have to say things are much brighter. We in the minority have found our niche, and with it a purpose. And I might add that we are not totally envious of the majority. I am sure our counterparts are properly disturbed by the severity of the problems we face both at the state and national level, and by the knowledge that their own day of accountability is less than two years away.

But we're not feeling good about their discomfiture because we realize that the public will hold us accountable, too, for the way we fulfill our assigned role . . . the role of the loyal opposition. Historically, opposing minorities have played vital roles in the course of government, and it is our goal to do likewise. Some say that there is a direct correlation between the size of the majority and the intensity with which the minority approaches its task. I hope that is the case in this instance.

We realize that people properly will judge us on how well we used our specialized legislative knowledge to scrutinize the proposals of the majority. How well we kept a watchdog's eye on the state treasury to guard against the unnecessary expenditures of funds. Whether we offered suitable alternatives when the majority's proposals were

Minority Viewpoint **Ashbach Sees** **Inequities In Public** **Employee Bargaining**

by Robert O. Ashbach
Senate Minority Leader

It appears that the Public Employee Labor Relations Act and amendments placed on it in the 1973-74 sessions of the legislature have brought about problems that should be corrected.

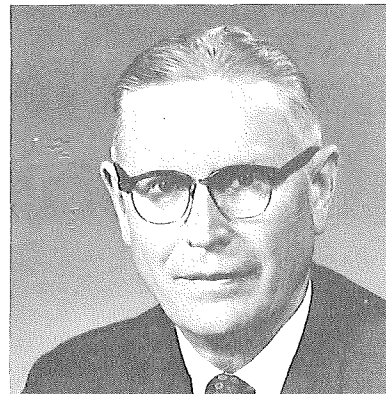
I support the proposal of the League of Municipalities to change the law so that it would not require a supervisor to be included with a bargaining unit of other employees. The amendments added to the law in this regard in 1973 reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of management in directing its day-to-day operations. For example, a foreman on a crew has his wages and conditions of employment negotiated by the people he is supposed to direct. This is not a very healthy situation in the interests of public employers or the public employees of any governmental unit.

Another area I believe we must think about is in the definition of a bargaining unit. The definition was amended in 1973 to change the long-time federal national labor board definition of a bargaining unit. The wishes of the public employer were deleted by the 1973 amendment. This should be reinstated so as to help minimize the proliferation of different bargaining units created in the various public endeavors. For instance, the number of bargaining units the state of Minnesota alone must deal with has now increased to 98. It could well go to 200 units in another year. Such proliferation means additional expense for the state of Minnesota and for the employees in negotiations. The number of units should be reduced and made more efficient and effective.

Another area of inequity is the so called "fair share." A person working 50 percent of the time, for instance, is

bad. And whether we supported the majority's proposals when they were good.

Essentially we in the minority must serve as the conscience of the Legislature. We must provide a reasoned and deliberative voice that speaks wisely and well on important issues. We must be the gadflies that keep the crowned heads of the majority from resting too comfortably. But most of all we must work as hard as we can to put ourselves out of our role. Only then will we be fulfilling our historic function.



often charged full union dues. This is an inequitable situation. A fair share must be redefined, and it must be applied sensibly to part-time workers.

In the area of binding arbitration, the 1973 amendments established some gray areas. Senator Jensen, Conzemius and I introduced a bill which would clarify the presentation of final positions to a board of arbitration. In addition, we feel that the board of arbitration must be constituted somewhat differently so that it represents the geographical area in which the arbitration is being used and implemented.

On the state level, I would hope the state negotiator would arrive at an agreement with state employees so that by the time the legislature gets around to passing the finance bills the agreement may be taken into consideration. It appears now that court litigation in the area of the community colleges, with the attempt to proliferate the number of bargaining units, has demoralized employees and staff members. We must do something to uncomplicate and unsnarl the controversies that are now existing. If negotiation and controversy at the present rate continue, it appears the legislature will have to arrive at a reasonable settlement and implement salary increases by law without the process of having meaningful negotiations.

I would hope that we could have it as we had during the 1973 session when the 1971 law was in effect. I can recall very well Mr. Robison, the director then of Council 6, saying that it was the 1971 law that allowed them to come to a reasonable agreement with the state. It appears now that the amendments put on in 1973 affecting the future have severely complicated the matter, and as a result, there is no agreement whatsoever in the area of state employees.

Since public employee bargaining has been one of my main areas of accomplishment and interest while in the state legislature, I am looking forward to some meaningful legislation to allow negotiations between state government and its employees to proceed in an orderly fashion.

Borden Seeks Passage Of Returnable Container Bill

People who follow the legislature know the name Winston Borden. A five-year Senate veteran, and now Assistant Majority Whip, Borden has centered his energy on legislation to improve the environment, protect the consumer, and investigate organized crime.

His work in these areas commands the respect of many while admittedly producing some anxiety among others. Known throughout the state as a "fighter" for the causes in which he believes, Borden has authored several pieces of important consumer and environmental legislation.

One key environmental bill is the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act passed into law in 1973. A second is the Critical Areas Act, and a third is the Minnesota Environmental Education Act. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act preserves and protects rivers in their existing state and identifies and preserves in a natural state selected portions of those rivers.

"When you consider the natural resources we have in Minnesota" Borden says, "and the short term profit to be derived from exploitation, the chance for damage and even destruction is obvious. Through the Wild Rivers Act we provide for the preservation of our rivers. The act sets standards and allows the Department of Natural Resources to develop rules and regulations governing the use of public waters in our state's most scenic areas."

Some of Borden's environmental measures have been the most controversial. For example, last session he authored a bill to provide the 5-cent deposit on all soft drink and malt liquor bottles and cans, more popularly known as the "ban the can" bill.

While the bill failed to win the necessary legislative support last session, the Brainerd Senator is back again with a similar bill.

"This is an environmental issue," Borden says. "With a returnable container system the consumer will save millions of dollars in soft drink and malt liquor purchases. In addition, we would save substantial amounts of natural resources and energy. Right now we have to import almost all of our aluminum for cans and in Minnesota we use the equivalent of 16,000,000 gallons of oil yearly to produce nonreturnable containers."

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has done a study which supports

Borden's view on the bill. Borden says, "The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency estimates that savings could total \$26.5 million if we changed to an all-returnable beverage container system. The savings would be in three areas — first, we would save in litter and solid waste collection, second we would save substantial amounts of energy, and third, the cost of beverages for the consumer would be reduced."

Borden knows that his bill will again face strong opposition both from industry and labor.

Another consumer bill authored by Borden is the Minnesota Anti-trust Act. That act, passed in 1971, gives the Attorney General the power to prosecute monopoly practices such as price-fixing and bid-rigging. In the last year, the Attorney General brought a number of monopoly prosecutions to a conclusion. For example, the Attorney General commenced litigation on behalf of municipalities owning water systems against eight manufacturers of cast iron pipe. The State alleged that the companies had engaged in price-fixing, market allocations, and bid-rigging. The case has been settled with the defendant companies paying municipalities more than \$240,000 in settlements.

Another case was brought against a number of major drug manufacturers. Known as the "tetracycline case", it was settled for more than \$1,000,000 which has been distributed to state and municipal hospitals, and welfare offices.

Commenting on the Anti-trust Act, Borden said, "I am particularly pleased that the Attorney General has proceeded against monopolies. Every businessman believes in the free enterprise system until he can establish a monopoly. There is too much price-fixing and as a result of it, all of us pay more than we should for goods and monopoly pricing feeds the fires of inflation."

It is Borden's interest in white collar crime and price-fixing that caused him to author a bill creating a legislative Commission on Organized Crime. He chaired the crime commission in 1974, and the commission report was received by the legislature earlier this year. According to the report, "People in Minnesota are not inclined to think we have a problem with organized crime. Emphasis is generally placed on solving each individual burglary. But we have an esti-

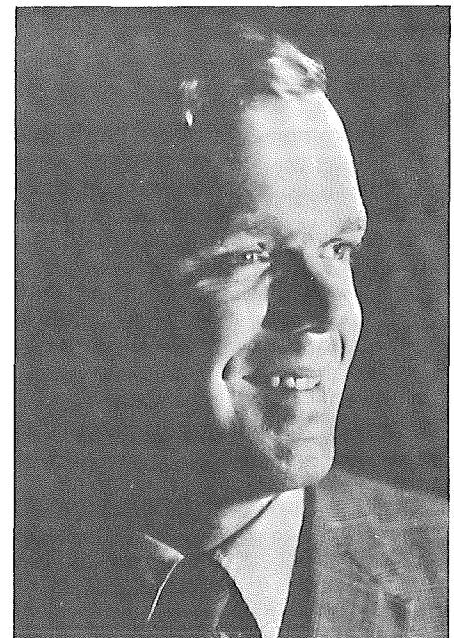
mated two dozen fencing operations in the metropolitan area alone. We will not begin to solve the problems of burglary and shoplifting until we put heat on the fence. We have to concern ourselves with people who sell stolen goods — not just those who steal them."

Borden emphasized that "Minnesota is not an island apart from the national organized crime problem. Corporate price-fixing, rotten meat operations and other forms of consumer fraud exist in Minnesota. In addition, we have burglary rings working in conjunction with fences, gambling operations with an annual gross in excess of \$100,000,000 yearly, and narcotics and prostitution operations."

"But let's be realistic," Borden says. "Organized crime is not going to disappear. At best we can prevent the situation in Minnesota from getting worse. It is to that end that the commission has recommended some 30 changes in Minnesota law dealing with the criminal element."

Borden's future legislative priorities most likely will parallel the concerns he has worked for in the past.

"I will try to speak out for the consumer and write legislation which guarantees a good environment for the people of Minnesota — to me those are very important issues."



Winston Borden
Assistant Majority Leader



Rochester Senator, Nancy Brataas, listens intently at her first committee meeting.

District 32 Senator Begins Term

"I'm Learning The Ropes"

When former Minority Leader Harold Krieger resigned from the Senate after being elected Olmsted County Judge, Nancy Brataas did not even consider running for his vacated seat. In fact, when the nominating committee met to select a candidate last December, Mrs. Brataas was in Cleveland working on a March of Dimes project.

"I was called in Cleveland," she remembers, "to see if I would be interested in running for the Senate. Obviously, I couldn't come home and run, but people wanted to put my name before the Republican convention. I have been in politics long enough to know that is not the way to run for endorsement, so I really put it out of my mind. It was just another time that it didn't work out for me."

Nevertheless, upon her return to Rochester, one of the first things she learned was that the nominating convention had not endorsed any candidate. And the time was right. Mrs. Brataas declared her candidacy and found herself in a primary fight for the Republican nomination.

Quite a contrast to the usual lengthy, drawn-out campaign, Mrs. Brataas recalls that her campaign strategy was planned between December 19 and January 2.

"We had to make some quick decisions. Are we going to have billboards, and, if so, how many? Are we going to have lawn signs? A telephone campaign? How much money do we need? Who is going to be the Finance Chairman? All of this while we were eating Christmas turkey. Really, so many people interrupted their lives on my behalf."

Senior Brataas is no stranger to politics. An activist for many years in the Republican party, she is a former state GOP chairwoman and headed

former President Nixon's re-election campaign in ten industrial states. But even with her extensive political background, she hesitates to take a stand on any issue at the present time.

"Being elected to either the Senate or House is just like anyone else taking on a new job," she states. "One doesn't have a handle or grasp on a new job immediately and you can't define what your accomplishments are going to be, particularly if you're in the Senate. My main challenge at the moment is learning the new procedures, which, of course, I'm not that familiar with. The conventions I have attended over the years are based on Robert's Rules of Order. The procedures are fascinating in the Legislature, but they are also much more complex."

Senator Brataas is also not hesitant to relate some amusing stories since she began her term — one of them directly related to the orientation all new Senators face after election.

She has been asked to co-author a number of bills and, like most other Senators, finds her desk flooded with legislation which she must read in an effort to determine if her name should be added as a sponsor.

"Well, I took the advice from a person I trust to co-author a bill, fully assured that I would never have to speak for it. But at my first committee meeting, the bill came up for discussion and the main author did not appear to testify on its behalf. And so it was a joke, because normally second authors are not called upon to testify. Afterward, Democrats and Republicans came up and told me the same thing happened to them — it was all good-natured."

As might be expected, Senator Brataas is constantly asked if her main legislative efforts will be in the area of women's rights. She believes that her

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election represents "equal rights in action" but that her main responsibility is to perform as well as she can as a Senator — not as a "woman" in the Senate."

"It would be a mistake for all other issues to become secondary, and for me to concentrate only on women's rights areas. I represent both men and women in Rochester."

Nonetheless, Brataas will not support the Republican party platform position to rescind the Equal Rights Amendment.

"Throughout my campaign I said repeatedly that I wouldn't vote to rescind the amendment. If there is new information that comes to light which I was not aware of at the time, obviously I want to consider it. But as of this time, I have not seen anything that would bring me to that point. I am really amazed at how many other women's issues there are that I, at least, have not been reading about in the paper."

"One thing in particular that impresses me is the caliber of people in the Senate. Often you hear derogatory remarks concerning the Legislature, but I'm truly impressed with the dedication I see. I think the courteous way in which Senators listen to testimony in committee, the types of questions they ask, all show a genuine desire to understand that particular issue."

"When I was in charge of the ten industrial states for the now infamous, Committee for the Re-election of the President . . . I could see the great assets of the Minnesota political system. In 1943, Governor Stassen did away with patronage for the most part in our political system. And that has made the whole difference. The volunteer ethic is so deeply engrained in the Republican and Democratic parties there is hardly any fraud — we don't have fraud as they do in other states. And it is a tribute to both Democrats and Republicans that this ethic has been carried out in the way it was meant to be."

Mrs. Brataas has been appointed to the Senate Education and Labor and Commerce Committees, and will also serve on the Labor subcommittee and special education and institutions subcommittee.

(continued from page 2)

I am not opposed to the concept, in fact, I support it. I'm the first to say its worth it. But I'm not so sure that unless the state maintains a very strong and guiding force it could leave us in a position of downgrading services to those in the area that need it."

Minnesota's tax structure also merits the concern of Olson. Expressing a need to rewrite property tax relief legislation to zero in on specific needs of people, especially low-income groups, Olson favors a functional approach which will permit the Legislature to disburse aids more equitably, and also allow people to judge where their money is going and how it is spent.

Above all, Senator Olson is convinced that the future may be more like the past. And he doesn't think that is such a bad proposition.

"As we turn our attention and our efforts to conservation of natural resources and preservation of our environment, we have also turned our attention to how important they are — that's really what we want to find ourselves enjoying and taking part in. When people talk about Minnesota, they speak of the quality of life we have here — and that's what it is and will remain — a quality of life."

(continued from page 5)

TRANSPORTATION AND GENERAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

(chairman, Senator Roger Laufenburger)



Subcommittees:

Highways; Elections; Veterans Affairs and General Legislation;

Chaired by Roger Laufenburger, the Transportation and General Legislation Committee considers all bills which encompass the area of transportation and election laws in the state.

Two election proposals currently under study include a bill to prohibit unions and other associations from contributing funds from dues to political campaigns, and a bill to regulate the position of names on ballots.

The committee meets Mondays and Wednesdays in Room 112 at the Capitol from 10:00-12:00.

Senate Committee Hearing Schedule

	Committee	Room	Hour		Committee	Room	Hour
Monday	Natural Resources and Agriculture	118	8-10 a.m.		Governmental Operations	112	8-10 a.m.
	Governmental Operations	112	8-10 a.m.		Education	118	10-12 noon
	Education	118	10-12 noon		Transportation and General Legislation	112	10-12 noon
	Transportation and General Legislation	112	10-12 noon		Finance	120	2-4 p.m.
	Finance	120	2-4 p.m.	Thursday	Taxes and Tax Laws	15	2-4 p.m.
	Taxes and Tax Laws	15	2-4 p.m.		Rules and Administration	118	8 a.m. or on call
Tuesday	Health, Welfare, and Corrections	112	8-10 a.m.	Friday	Health, Welfare, and Corrections	112	8-10 a.m.
	Local Government	118	8-10 a.m.		Local Government	118	8-10 a.m.
	Metropolitan and Urban Affairs	118	10-12 noon		Metropolitan and Urban Affairs	118	10-12 noon
	Labor and Commerce	112	10-12 noon		Labor and Commerce	112	10-12 noon
	Judiciary	118	2-4 p.m.		Judiciary	118	2-4 p.m.
				On Call	Committee on Committees		On all
Wednesday	Natural Resources and Agriculture	118	8-10 a.m.				

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