

January 10, 1985

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, the rule change that I am proposing is in your rule book. It is amending Rule 3, Section 2, subsection (b). The gist of it is passed out to you. The change would provide that committee assignments should be based on seniority. Seniority should be the determining factor for the selection to be on a particular committee. I think the events of yesterday required the Legislature to take an evaluation of how this body is going to operate for the next two years. My view of the body, yesterday, was chaos. We didn't have any semblance of order. We had people being chosen for the chairmanships, as well as in the committees, on basis that I don't feel should be in this body. They were being chosen on the basis of areas that this Legislature...it is against everything that this Legislature stands for. The Unicameral was established over 50 years ago by the inspiration of George Norris. We named the Chamber after him. His basic theory was that the issues should be decided, the people that should lead the Legislature should be decided on what, in fact, is best. I'm afraid yesterday we saw partisanship veer its ugly head in this body. It bothers me because I feel that for the next two years it could be an issue in a lot of different bills that will be coming before this body. But it wasn't just partisanship. People were chosen and placed on different committees, not because they were qualified, but for reasons, well, that they shouldn't have been. I feel that if you establish a seniority method what you will have is at least some semblance of order. It isn't exactly foreign to this body, it used to be the basis in which the members were selected for the committee and the chairmanships. I think that the rule should be adopted. As for myself, I was very fortunate in my caucus to receive committees that I feel I will do an outstanding job at. I do have a legal background. I will be placed on Judiciary Committee for the next two years. I served on the committee, I feel, well the past two years. I'm going to be also serving on Government, Military and Veterans Affairs which has a legal background. I feel that I will be an important asset to that committee, and help to guide the legislation and mold the legislation for the coming years. But I feel that this body is lacking in traditions. When you lose traditions you fall into anarchy and chaos. The only people that suffer, besides the members in this body, are the people in this state. I would urge the adoption of this rule. Thank you.