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Delegates to the New Jersey Constitutional Convention:

WE WOULD LIKE 15 MINUTES OF YOUR TIME. WE HAVE NEW EVIDENCE ON NEBRASKA'S UNICAMERAL TO PRESENT.

When we learned that the New Jersey Constitutional Convention had decided to invite Nebraska's Lt. Governor and the Clerk of the Unicameral to tell it about the Unicameral The Paul Revere Tax Brigade asked Nebraska's citizens to tell us how they felt about the Unicameral. We also asked them to compare the Unicameral with the bicameral system where they were familiar with both. Many of them did just this. We promised to air the results and are endeavoring to do so.

As we had hoped, individuals from various walks of life, political affiliations, and ideological positions replied.

The result was more than two to one against the Unicameral, regardless of position in the above classifications. The belief was repeatedly expressed that Nebraskans would change to a bicameral system if given the opportunity to vote on it.

For the most part proponents of the Unicameral based their support on its theoretical capabilities and on its physical accessibility to them as individuals.

Its opponents included newspaper editors, a Senator in the Unicameral, others with political and governmental experience, and ordinary citizens.

The most frequent argument in favor of the Unicameral is that it is non-partisan. This is also one of the most frequently mentioned faults --- no party discipline, 50 members - 50 parties; it is difficult to determine a candidate's position; non-partisanship destroys the chain of responsibility.

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The next most frequent argument in favor of the Unicameral is that it eliminates the possibility of inter-House manipulation. Reply -- Lobbyists can too easily influence legislation; the group of registered Lobbyists has proliferated until it numbers more than 100; it is called the House of Lobbyists where nearly all legislation originates; a legislator need never buy a meal himself. There is no check by a second House on unwise legislation. Thus, law after law has been declared unconstitutional by the courts. The people have had to resort to initiative referendum too many times. A few Legislators on key committees can and have run the Unicameral.

The remaining arguments of those in favor of the Unicameral occur with less frequency.

It's cheaper --- Reply - it's more expensive. The original 30 members have been increased to 49; instead of early adjournment sessions are longer, never ending before May or June and sometimes lasting until the first of autumn.

It's more efficient --- Reply - bills are wrestled around in committee after committee and sometimes the entire Unicameral acts as a committee, lengthening the session.

Fewer bills are introduced --- Now as many as 900 are introduced, where previously only a few hundred rated bills were considered. Voters may be asked to vote on as many as 19 questions at election time and the wording is confusing.

Requires public hearings on each bill --- It appears that few of the non-lobbying public can take the time to attend.

It complies with the "one man one vote" decision --- so did Nebraska's former two House Legislature.

It is frequently pointed out that most of the other 49 states have investigated the Unicameral and decided against it.

Nebraska's citizen's efforts to restore a two-house system on several occasions were defeated by technicalities.

Finally, we find, amazingly, that Nebraskans in a rural, lightly-populated, conservative, agricultural state today - after 30 years of the Unicameral - face the same problems that New Jerseyans face in a densely populated, liberal, industrial state: loss of local control, poor quality education with emphasis on quantity, exorbitant taxes, poor roads in some areas and good ones in favored areas, preferential treatment to those who contribute least in state revenues, etc. Nebraska, with the help of its Unicameral seems to have gotten into "this mess" a lot faster than we did in New Jersey