

The election eye...

Idaho legislators take key convention roles

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Unlike most years, Idaho legislators took key roles in this year's state party conventions.

Usually the lawmakers have been content to let other party leaders take the limelight or simply have not attended biennial state conventions. This was not the case this year.

At both the state party conventions, legislators had a major hand in the proceedings, particularly in drafting the platform and resolutions and delivering key talks.

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At the Republican convention, 16 of 19 senators and 36 of 70 state representatives were on hand. At the Democrat sessions, 13 of 16 senators and 15 of 20 state representatives attended. That's remarkable record' since a dozen have announced they will not seek re-election and had no reason to attend.

At the GOP meeting, Rep. Jack Kennewick, Boise, assistant House majority leader, headed the important platform committee; House Speaker Ralph Olmstead, Twin Falls, and Senate Majority Leader James Risch, Boise, gave key talks.

State Sen. David Little is the Republican national committeeman and State Sen. Larry Craig, Midvale, is the nominee for 1st District congressman.

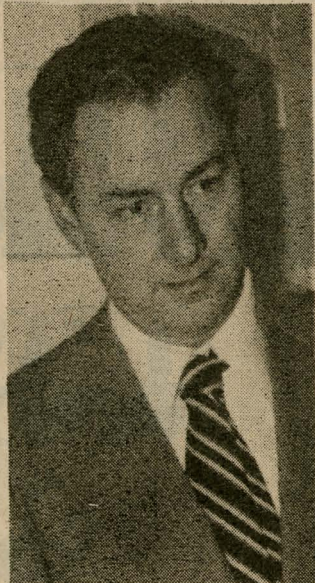
Kennewick also depended on fellow legislators to help him draft the platform, naming Reps. Tom Boyd, Moscow, and Steve Antone, Rupert, to head the agriculture subcommittee; Rep. Darwin Young, Blackfoot, government and fiscal affairs; Rep. Larry Harris, natural resources and environment; Rep. Mack Neibauer, Ola, fish and game; Sen. Leon Swenson, Energy; Rep. Jim Golder, Boise, commerce and industry, Sen. Walter Yarbrough, Grand View, health and welfare; J. Wilson Steen, Glenns Ferry, labor, and Sen. Dane Watkins, Idaho Falls, family.

All of the Republican leadership was on hand except House Caucus Chairman Bud Lewis, St. Maries. The leaders attending included Senate President Pro Tem Reed Budge, Soda Springs; Risch; Assistant Minority Leader Steen and Caucus Chairman Yarbrough from the Senate; and Kennewick, Olmstead, and Majority Leader Walter Little, New Plymouth,

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Headed platforms

STATE REPS. Jack C. Kennewick, R-Boise, House assistant majority leader, left, and Gary Gould, D-Pocatello, were platform chairmen at their respective state party conventions last month. Idaho legislators took the most prominent part in their conventions this year than any of recent years.

from the House.

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Democratic lawmakers who hope to take control of the Senate and significantly close the gap in the House also wielded strong influence in their convention. They trail in the State Senate 19-16 and in the House 50-20.

State Rep. Gary Gould, Pocatello, headed both the platform and resolutions committees and fellow legislators chaired the key subcommittees, Rep. Roger Guernsey, Boise, natural resources; Sen. Lester Clemm, Troy, economic resources, Sen. Israel Merrill, Blackfoot, human resources; Sen. Norma Dobler, Moscow, education; Rep. Steve Scanlin, Caldwell, energy; and Rep. Margaret McLaughlin, Orofino, local government.

Most of the leaders also were on hand, including Senate Minority Leader Cy Chase, St. Maries, who has announced he

will not seek re-election but who headed a movement to get the uncommitted delegates for Sen. Ted Kennedy; Assistant Minority Leader Kermit Kiebert, Hope, and Caucus Chairman Merrill, Blackfoot, from the Senate; and Minority Leader Patricia McDermott, Pocatello, from the House. House Assistant Minority Leader Ron Barlow, Lewiston, who also is not seeking re-election; and Caucus Chairman Marion Davidson, Bonners Berry, were not on hand.

Ms. McDermott presided over the banquet and also was elected to the executive committee, and Rep. Scanlin, was one of the leaders campaigning for Sen. Kennedy.

Legislators of both parties thus had a key hand in drafting the resolutions and platforms. If they don't like any part of them or the proceedings at the conventions they can largely blame their colleagues.