

The Bonneville scene . . .

Burtenshaw election enhances

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The election of Democrat Clyde A. Burtenshaw to Bonneville County Commission chairman is a unique political development, but one that enhances the posture of the county government.

It's the first time in at least 36 years and probably in history of the county that a minority member has been elevated to the chairmanship.

Burtenshaw's leadership

qualities and background made him the logical choice, but there appears a political tenet that the chairmanship must go to one of the majority party. The other two members of the committee are Republicans, A. Wylie Snarr, retired Osgood farmer, and Tom Loertscher, young Bone rancher.

All three of the commissioners are viewed as conservatives and the party label is insignificant in how they con-

duct party business.

Burtenshaw showed that he could work well with the former county commission, which was dominated by the defeated chairman, Artell Suitter.

It's to Snarr's credit that he was able to toss partisan consideration aside and nominate Burtenshaw. Snarr is one of the warm and pleasant personalities at the courthouse in conducting his duties as the building and grounds supervisor. His record shows he has followed

rather than led in the conduct of county business. He obviously didn't want the chairmanship, which he likely could have had, in view of his seniority and majority party status.

Loertscher, who may have secretly wanted the chairmanship although he has no governmental experience, placed Republican Party loyalty first. He opposed the Burtenshaw election.

The published statement of Loertscher that he felt he owed the Republicans his election and that if he were a Democrat he wouldn't have been elected is astonishing.



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Run county government

THE NEW Bonneville County Commission which has vowed a new openness in county government and spirit of cooperation consists of the new chairman, Clyde A. Burtenshaw, seated, and standing, A. Wylie

Snarr, left, and Tom Loertscher, right. For what is believed the first time in history a minority party member, Democrat Burtenshaw is the chairman while the two other members are Republicans.

*Story continued
reverse side*

commission

Loertscher appears to forget quickly that it was mainly those who are independents who worked hardest for his election, particularly in the primary, to beat Suttler.

An analysis indicates Suttler lost, rather than Loertscher won that election. Any other acceptable candidate likely could have also ousted Suttler.

Loertscher defeated Democrat Jess Schow, retired postal employee, in the general election. Schow had been handily beaten two years previously by Snarr before the county commission districts were changed to put Schow in the 2nd instead of 1st district.

Snarr was elected to a four-year term and what the Republican hierarchy thinks of him can make little difference, as he likely wouldn't seek re-election. Even if he did, his strong vote-getting attraction would indicate he could be re-elected. He beat a formidable and capable Democrat, J. Philip Jordin, in the general election.

The fallacy of Loertscher's statements can best be reflected in the fact that Jerry Woolf, a Democrat, comfortably defeated Republican Steve Hart for county prosecuting attorney.

Woolf's Democratic label was incidental because there was a

strong movement against Hart as chief deputy under Prosecutor Gary Jensen. Woolf was backed by large groups who had little party affiliation, much as in Loertscher's case.

It's also to Bonneville Republican Chairman John Scoresby's credit that he accepted Burtenshaw's election with good grace. Scoresby is a devout Republican who wants understandably to see members of his party re-elected,

regardless of other factors.

Hopefully, the new county commission will take a new direction and conduct a new openness in county government and closer cooperation with the city on many fronts.

In this connection, it might be well for the commission to consider a shakeup in the building permit department, which has been a source of bitter controversy under Max Brinton.

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The political pulse

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