

Sen. Lowell Thomas, Jr. Rebuts Nome Editorial

(Editor's Note: Lowell Thomas, Jr. is a State Senator in the Alaska legislature.)

May 12, '67

The Editor
NOME NUGGET
Nome, Alaska

Dear Mr. Editor:—

I have just seen the TUNDRA TIMES April 21 reprint of your editorial entitled "Handwriting On The Wall" in which you have reached an understandable but nevertheless wrong conclusion that I am no longer a friend of the folks up in your part of the country — all

because I voted against House Joint Resolution 21 which called upon Congress to invoke a federal Constitutional Convention for the stated purpose of considering the so-called "Dirksen Amendment", an amendment that would permit state legislatures across the nation to elect one house on a basis other than population. You have concluded that those of us who defeated this resolution in the Senate are sympathetic only with the city voters and that my "sympathies lie only with the majority of voters."

Now, Mr. Editor, let me

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explain my action on this resolution in the Senate, but first let me inform you and your readers that I am NOT going to be a statewide candidate for anything in '68; my term in the state-Senate is for four years and I will serve there for at least that long. I am writing solely because I don't like to see misunderstanding go unchallenged—the result can only be an undesirable increase in sectionalism.

First of all, I have stated publicly many times that I regret the downgrading of geographical representation in our legislature. However, I do not believe that a national Constitutional Convention is the way to remedy the situation. Such a convention would not necessarily be limited to consideration of the "Dirksen Amendment." Many other constitutional changes might be proposed. Anything could happen! I believe that our Constitution, although perhaps not perfect, has served us well as America has developed into the richest, most powerful nation on earth. The calling of such a convention could be like burning down the house to get

rid of the mice!

In voting against this resolution I also resented the pressure that was brought to bear upon many of us in the Senate by the aides of Senator Dirksen, via the long distance phone. I don't like having my arm twisted in the middle of the night, as was the case.

Those of us in the state Senate who voted against this convention — calling resolution did so primarily because we feared what could happen if our nation's Constitution were opened up to amendment; this includes our most able Majority Leader, Brad Phillips who acted in a highly responsible manner as an Alaskan and an American legislator. You can't imagine the pressure he withstood from the national level!

Finally, Mr. Editor, I urge you to examine the voting record of all Legislators during this last session; I think you'd be surprized to see just how many friends your readers have in the Legislature.

Thank you. Best wishes—

Sincerely yours,
Lowell Thomas, Jr.