

March 27, 1974

SENATOR DE CAMP: Mr. President, members of the legislature I was just looking at my desk and I saw a little note there a quotation that Eric Servide made on television, he said, "The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of well meaning but without understanding". I think that Senator Chambers, Senator Fowler, Senator Cavanaugh are men of great well meaning. I don't doubt their sincerity but I think that they do not understand the problem. What they are going to do by their actions or what they have done is not gain more employment or higher wages for a lot of young people, but they have guaranteed that a lot of young people won't have any employment at all. Employment is based on one idea and that is that somebody I or anybody else, can hire ex-individual or number of individuals and pay them a certain amount of money for a certain job and have a reasonable profit left over from that employment. Now when it costs us more to hire that individual then that individual can produce, we don't hire the individual. Young people, particularly young people still in highschool the people that this bill would apply to generally do not have the experience and generally do not have the working hours and the overall situation that makes them as productive as somebody in the full time labor market. Therefore you can economically, at least under existing conditions, particularly in out-state Nebraska employ them under the same conditions and still come out. As a direct result of what we did last year when we tried to put everybody under minimum wage, I know a lot of young people in my area did not get jobs and could not get jobs because people couldn't afford to hire them any more. Another thing that I don't think that Senator Cavanaugh, or Fowler, or Chambers are possibly aware of is the whole origin of minimum wage laws. I mentioned this briefly on the floor last year. Minimum wage laws came about out of New England when Senator Kennedy and some others utilized the concept of minimum wage to make sure that the south could not employ people at lower wages than they were in New England and therefore the south could not continue to destroy the textile industry in New England, which they were able to do with cheaper labor. So the minimum wage origin wasn't to help the poor people, on the contrary it was to protect the rich people, and that is exactly what happened in the history of this country. Everytime the Federal Government has increased, and if you want to check your federal records or any studies that you want, every time they have increased the minimum wage, the unemployment of among the following, the poor, blacks, among the teenage and the young unskilled population has sky rocketed up to 25-30%. As it finally caught up, it would go down to 14-15-13 and then when they increased the minimum wage gain, you had the same results. So what you are going to see is exactly the opposite of what Senator Fowler and the others are trying to achieve. You are going to see a lot of young people that won't be able to hold jobs in this state because nobody can afford to employ them. I urge you to adopt Senator Carstens bill and not to go along with any kill motion.

PRESIDENT: Senator NORE, R. Lewis, then Senator Keyes.

SENATOR NORE: Mr. President, fellow members, I think that this bill is a good one and I have often said here and probably its getting a little bit trite to you that idleness is the devils workshop and there is nothing more devastating to an individual or to families or to a nation or to civilization than idleness. An idle civilization has never