

April 2, 1975

don't let Senator Marvel practice it, if he believes it, or let the parents of the child practice it on themselves but they are in a position where if their pain gets too great, they can go to the doctor. They can have a prescription for themselves but it is easy to watch somebody else suffer and say bear with it a while longer, my child, this is how God tests you. Well, the child would want to say, "You take the pain and you be tested for a while." I think it is up to the Legislature to be the staying arm of the angel in this situation and not allow these children to be put in the position of an Isaac who would be slain by his father, however well intentioned but misguided he may be.

PRESIDENT: Two minutes, Senator.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I am opposed to this amendment. I think it would be the grossest error for the Legislature to adopt it and the fact that it may exist in 37 states could just mean that a snowball has started and it gains in momentum and size and each state points to the other state that has done it and without analysis, they accept something that others have done. You don't always say that because 37 states have done it, 37 are right. 37 of them could be wrong. There are statutes that states have adopted before that were ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court so Nebraska should not always follow what other states do. Sometimes Nebraska has to break new ground and point the direction to what ought to be. Therefore, I am offering this amendment which would strike out all reference to allowing people to treat a child by prayer alone and deny that child the medical attention which that child may greatly need.

PRESIDENT: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: A couple of questions of Senator Chambers, if he would yield, please? Senator Chambers, first of all, could you define Christian Science for me?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I am not a member of that religion. I wouldn't even want to attempt to.

SENATOR KOCH: Well, the dictionary defines it as a theory of a nature of disease and a system of therapeutic practice founded by a Mrs. Baker. Now, therapeutic means, if you look in the dictionary further, that means the practice of healing. It doesn't necessarily mean of prayer and if you also look at Article I, Section 4 of the Constitution, it says in Nebraska, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: What is the question you want to ask?

SENATOR KOCH: Well, the question there, if the Constitution states that we, as a body, should pass suitable laws to protect religious denominations, are we bound by this until the courts overrule that part of it?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Koch, constitutions are written in general terms and legislation, as you know, is written specifically to fill in or flush out those generalized statements in the constitution but a law which is said to protect religious denominations simply means that no law