

April 21, 1975

the portion they were going to lose, so I think today, we should go ahead and pass this amendment and do what originally what we really wanted to do. We passed the sales and income tax with the idea we would rebate the average amount of food to people. Not all but average.

PRESIDENT: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'll be brief. Senator DeCamp occasionally has flashes of brilliance and this morning was one of those times. If this condition would persist, I think Senator DeCamp would be on my side of the issue more times than he is now. But anyway, I like to ask Senator Swigart a question if I may since he is the defender of Omaha. Senator Swigart, you talked about how Omaha would be short certain money if fairness were done to the citizens. When you're down here in this Legislature do you feel your job is to represent Omaha as an entity or to represent the best interest of citizens as people?

SENATOR SWIGART: I think it's to pay pretty close attention to both.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Which do you feel if it comes to a situation as we will have to do on issues that come before this Legislature of deciding between a city as a city which we're doing on this issue and the people as people. You're saying that your first responsibility goes to the city as an entity.

SENATOR SWIGART: No, I'm not saying that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Then why can't you support this amendment. I must have misunderstood you.

SENATOR SWIGART: Because I think the true hardship would come back on the people to make up the tax and you can't just leave a vacuum. You have to fill that up, and I notice that you and others who defend your side have not said one word about how to make up that tremendous tax that we have to make up some way.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Swigart, I have one other question. Do you feel that when the tax was adopted, the sales tax, that there was an understanding whether or not anybody said the specific words, we're going to give back every nickel that people pay in on food. Do you think the understanding was that the money paid on food and taxes would be given back through the credit or refund, whatever you call it?

SENATOR SWIGART: My impression was that that was the contention of the state but it was not that of the city of Omaha.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well now we're not dealing with the City of Omaha at this point, we're talking about the original idea of the food tax. Do you feel that governments have a responsibility to keep their promises?

SENATOR SWIGART: Absolutely.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Do you feel they have a moral responsibility.

SENATOR SWIGART: Yes sir.