

we won't get enough money to paint the white line down the street and that's what it's going to amount to but the people in the City of Bellwood, three hundred sixty people who do pay sales taxes when they go to Omaha. So I think that the proposition that we have here today is not only unfair to all of the citizens of the state, but it is particularly unfair to the citizens of the City of Omaha who are going to be required to pay it, who are going to be told the Legislature increased it, who are going to be told that it's a temporary tax and who are going to be told that it came about as a result of the action of the Court of Industrial Relations, an action which the city could not prevent. Senator Chambers has properly identified all of those arguments, done it far better than I could, but I want to point out again as I have here before, the problems of the City of Omaha are not going to go away. The problems of the City of Omaha are going to be greater a year from now, two years from now, five years from now, than they are today. The problems of this state are going to increase. As I have said earlier, the problems that we have had outlined here concerning Omaha are only a prelude to what the state will face in a year or two or five years. If you walk into the East Senate lounge in this building today you will find buckets catching water dripping through the roof of this building. That will sober you a little bit because we didn't fix the roof on the most beautiful building in the State of Nebraska. A city is no different. A town is no different. Bellwood, Nebraska is no different. You have to take care of the maintenance as you go along and the City of Omaha has neglected their maintenance. It's just that simple. The argument has been advanced that the fourteen percent pay raise for the police has been the thing that has broke the camel's back. I have said earlier that if the police in Omaha did not have a raise for three years, there should have been some money in the bank to pay for those raises. The city, in effect, saved money for three years by not increasing those salaries...

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: One minute, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...and the problem is there. The bill had to be met but it was not met and now they say, let's have a sales tax for a period of one year. I say, I'm against the bill. I think it's wrong. I think the city has not exercised their full prerogatives in searching out other sources of revenue, but if you're going to impose this tax on the people of the City of Omaha, then at least give those people the chance to say no or yes. I am not one who ordinarily advocates a vote of the people in matters of this kind, but I think that when you talk about increasing the tax by fifty percent it is a matter serious enough to allow the people to have a voice. We have heard a lot of talk about lid bills. We have heard a lot of talk about holding down the cost of government. We have heard a lot of talk about shifting the load from one subdivision to another, but all of a sudden we come along and with a holier-than-thou crisis attitude, we increase the tax on the people of the City of Omaha by fifty percent and we expect them to take it and take it silently. I think it's wrong. I would hope you would adopt the amendment.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: The Chair recognizes Senator Stoney.

SENATOR STONEY: Mr. President, as we all know this is a permissive piece of legislation that would allow the City of Omaha to impose this additional one half percent in the sales tax.