

Landis gave us that the reason we will be taking this up is so that we can vote on a one-half percent sales tax increase. I think we all know that those who sat down before the session started and made the agreements and the coalitions and the trade-offs on all the various tax exemptions that we have voted for, not I, but on what the majority have voted for, maybe some of you didn't know that the revenue was really going to be coming through an increase in sales tax. And I rather imagine the motion wouldn't be made at five o'clock in the afternoon if the votes weren't already there to increase it 5 percent for the state, or 4.5 percent it will be for the state. I think that will put Lincoln at 6 percent, Omaha at 6 percent. I don't know what North Platte and Bellevue will go to, but make no mistake, this was planned from the beginning and up until now all we have said is all these big exemptions have been causing an increase in the income tax for the middle income. If we put up 130 now and we vote for the half cent sales tax increase, which is the whole purpose of this bill, now you're not just taking from the middle income to give a tax break to those that make hundreds of thousands, to give a tax break to nonprofit organizations, you're taking it from the very poorest of the poor, those who have to buy clothing, those who can't afford new shoes and have to get them resoled. I don't know if there will ever be another day or if there will ever be another Legislature in the history of Nebraska that will rob from the poor to give it to the rich. I know what I'm saying is pure rhetoric to everybody and I guess I have to say it because I've been feeling it for so long. A black man stands up in this Legislature a minimum of once a week and says, you Christians. Senator Chambers, those of us who proclaim to be Christians and follow Christianity, many of us only believe in it on Sunday. The rest of the week we are businessmen and women and we are voting to promote so-called jobs which are pie in the sky. It's all right to go to church on Sunday and have the minister or the rabbi or the priest say, I was naked and you clothed me, I was hungry and you fed me, I was homeless and you gave me shelter, that doesn't count today.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR HIGGINS: That never counts when we're doing business. You can't be a Christian seven days a week and vote to take from the very poor and give it to the very, very rich. So I don't blame Senator Chambers for saying he does not belong to any organized religion. I've never heard him say he doesn't believe in God, but I've heard him say, I don't belong to an organized religion. And if we vote to give a half cent sales tax increase