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April 27, 1999 LB 663, 664

SENATOR CUDABACK: LB 663 is advanced to E & R
Initial. Mr. Clerk, next agenda item.

CLERK: LB 664, by Senator Wickersham. (Read title.) The bill was introduced January 20, referred to Appropriations, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments. (AM1303, Legislative Journal page 1629.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Wickersham, recognized to open on 664.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Mr. President. This bill, unlike the previous one, doesn't memorialize an event at Fort Robinson or reconstruct a building which is particularly historically significant in and of itself. What this bill does is appropriate \$350,000 to Game and Parks as one-half, or...half a million dollars, I'm sorry, \$500,000, as one-half of the construction cost for a building that would be commonly characterized as a Buffalo Soldier barracks. The Buffalo Soldiers were black soldiers. They played a significant part in the history of western Nebraska and the settlement of the entire West. For the most part, their contribution has not been recognized. Senator Chambers I don't think was there, but at least he's heard about it. (Laughter) The...and it is a bit unusual that, I think, the black soldiers have not been recognized for their contribution that they made. And I don't know that reconstructing one of the barracks that they lived in, or...is an appropriate or a complete recognition of what they did, or their record. But at Fort Robinson in particular, two regiments of black troops, the Buffalo Soldiers, were based there at one time: the 9th Cavalry and the 10th Cavalry. And they had an extremely good record while they were based there. In fact, while they were based there, there were ten Medal of Honor winners in the 9th Cavalry alone that were stationed at Fort Robinson. They served in a variety of capacities, not only at Fort Robinson but in other posts across the West, including the Southwest, where they were involved in campaigns against the Utes and the Apaches and other tribes. They...as I indicated, they also served in the Cuban war at San Juan Hill. One of the pictures that you have attached, you see rather a large gentleman with a beard. This was undoubtedly one of Senator