

April 4, 1979

LB 285

and tell the people, you don't have to do this, you don't have to do that or abdicate in all those other responsibilities we gave to you. There wasn't any conservatism here yesterday when we advanced LB 412 and we squandered \$400,000 of state money and God knows how much federal money.

PRESIDENT: One minute, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: I don't see the same conservatism on the Budget Committee relative to capital construction. There is no big pressing need from my district for a Theater Arts Building for seven million bucks but it is in that budget and it is going to stay in that budget because of political realities. So I think let's meet our own responsibilities and let's not be quite so quick to point the finger at the local people because they can get kicked out of office just as we can. I would have to oppose the Dworak amendment because it is bad for my district. It is bad for the rural areas. I think it is bad for the state.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Johnson.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I wanted to respond to a comment that my good friend, Senator Dworak, made which I believe is a comment that continues to cause the public to see government as constantly growing and is never making retrenchments. Senator Dworak said, that we all know that government grows and grows and grows and never cuts back. In 1975 the Douglas County Board of Commissioners cut back. They closed the County Hospital except for a very limited number of cases displacing a number of workers in the County Hospital. They reduced poor relief by 50% and it chopped several millions of dollars out of the budget for the Eastern Nebraska Human Services Agency. It cut back. We all know that locally elected officials do respond to taxpayer grievances and when they see that money is going into services or into capital expenses or what have you are exceeding the ability and the willingness of the public to bear the cost. They make cutbacks and they will continue to make cutbacks. So I submit that factually it is not correct to say that government always grows and grows and grows and never responds to the electorate and never cuts back because, in fact, it does do that. Now a lid bill is not a bill designed to cripple and maim institutions that provide us essential services. All a lid bill does is control in a reasonable way the growth of government and that is what LB 285 does.

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