

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise in strong support of the Kremer motion, and I'm going to say it the way I believe it to be. I do not know if Senator Merz knows what he is supporting or not. I do not know if Senator Dworak and Senator Cope know, but I know full well that Senator Fowler knows what he's doing, and I'm going to tell you very frankly that Senator Fowler and I have cooperated many times on legislation in this body, but on water issues we are diabolically opposed. Now this takes no great stretch of the imagination for me to tell you where I stand in regard to the Natural Resources Commission. I have been a critic of that Commission from time to time, but I want to say here and now what no one else will say on this floor, because I believe it to be the truth and I tell it to you as I believe it to be. The issue boils down to one very simple one. Tell the Sierra Club and the environmentalists of the State of Nebraska, control the water both surface and underground, or tell the Natural Resources Commission, which is we believe the registered and recognized agency, exercise that control. Now Senator Merz says they haven't done anything. I challenge him to that. For thirty-five years I've flown this state from one end to the other and I can point out more development, more soil conservation practices, more small dams in Nebraska than in any of the surrounding states and I have covered them all. Senator Merz talks about the water problems in his area. There were water problems down there, Senator Merz, before you discovered oil in Falls City and there will be water problems there forever because God didn't put any water underneath that soil. Now if you want water you go to the Platte Valley or the Loup Valley for it, and we will sell you a farm...I'll sell you a farm. I'll buy your farm that has the oil well on it if you want to sell it. But the point I want to make is this, it's a question of the haves and the have-nots. It's a question of those who would develop the resources we have and those who would have no development. Senator Dworak talks about minimum stream flow. I stood on this floor several days ago and I quoted former Senator Stan Matzke when he was asked, don't you regret seeing the Platte River dry? And he said, no, because that means that that water is being used for the benefit of the State of Nebraska, and not being allowed to trickle along down into the Missouri into the Gulf of Mexico to help no one. I want to say that I feel the same way. Sure you'd like to have a minimum stream flow. Who is going to regulate the minimum stream flow? You get a three inch rain one night and the river runs bank to bank. It doesn't rain for six months it's going to be dry. That Platte River has been dry before, it's