

March 24, 1980

LB 998

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Simon, do you want to close on your amendment?

SENATOR SIMON: Mr. President and members of the body, I had hoped that perhaps we might have gotten a bit more floor debate on this issue this morning and I am sure that as happened last time, there will be people coming in that will just be voting who have no idea what the issue is, but I guess that is par for the course. It was interesting last time, and I might mention that on that particular vote that there were several people who came into the body who did know how they were voting on that one too, and it is generally the custom on Appropriations bills that we accept lock, stock and barrel everything that the chairman and the committee have voted on, and, of course, we all know the policy is that we do not change any Appropriation bills on the floor. That is a code and a policy that is written in blood. It cannot be changed. Even members of the committee who wish to make changes cannot do so. I think in general that policy is not a bad one, Senator Warner. It keeps us from having chaos on the floor but I also think that as a member of this body that I have got a legitimate right and responsibility when I feel that there is a need to make a change to do so, and you were even hardpressed to say...to give a legitimate reason why \$50,000 could not be transferred from one department to the other, other than obviously the committee would not have provided, you know, any slush money for the Department of Welfare. I suggest to the members of the body the issue is a very simple one and one which the body does have a second chance to vote on, and that is whether or not we feel that there is a potential of a problem with nursing homes in our state. Now after the debate and the vote last week, I have received another five or six phone calls including people who have worked at nursing homes, one from an LPN who listed very specifically particular abuses that have taken place. I just wish that somehow I could have each of you sitting on the phone in my house listening to these people tell their stories to me and then perhaps you might realize the severity of the problem and not be so lax when you vote on these issues. It seems to me that \$50,000 is a small price to pay, and now I am not even talking about an appropriation. We are talking about merely a transfer of funds, \$50,000, for a study of the nursing home industry, and I would suggest that this, at least, will be the final vote on this issue this year, and that this final vote then will definitely reflect the views of this Legislature regarding nursing homes in Nebraska. I move for the adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The motion is the adoption of the Simon

8889