

January 13, 1981

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I have always been in favor of not limiting the number of bills that a senator can introduce. Senator DeCamp is a person who keeps me going different directions as to how I respond to what he does and at least once in the session I have to give the little rhyme, "There once was a little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead, when she was good she was very, very good and when she was bad she was horrid." Senator DeCamp's last presentation was good. It was very, very good, as a matter of fact, and were I to follow the practices of Coach Osborne I would tell him if he didn't play up to that standard every time he spoke, he would have to sit in his chair and not utter a word which would mean anytime he opposed a position of mine he would be in his chair, but nevertheless, this is an issue that relates to freedom of speech, freedom of expression. There are different positions that people hold in the society which causes them to use different means to express what it is they have to say. For the news media there is a difference between speaking as an individual and speaking as a member of the press. As a private individual there may not be a right to protect sources of certain statements that are made, but because of the nature and the function of the news reporting service, there are laws that will say that under certain circumstances a news person need not reveal a source. There are certain procedures which must be gone through before the police can ransack a news office. Those who established the Constitution of this country understood some of the problems that could develop when a government became too strong or too monolithic, therefore, the aim of a constitution is to protect those who are in a numerical minority from the tyranny of the majority. The Constitution will say that even though there is a numerical majority in a legislative body there are certain things they cannot do because the Constitution prohibits it. Freedom of expression was one of the ideas enshrined in the first amendment to the Constitution and at any point, at any level, and at any time when assault is made against freedom of expression for anybody or any group, then those who believe that a constitution is designed to safeguard certain rights, should speak out. There are certain rights so fundamental that they are not granted by any governing body. The right to expression is not granted by the government. The government cannot grant such a right. You have that right as a human being. All that the government can do is protect your exercise of that right. So we have to distinguish between the privileges that are granted by a government and those which cannot be granted or influenced by it but