

January 13, 1981

but we don't tell them, you know, we don't just specifically authorize anything in excess to that.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Wesely, do you wish to speak to the Newell amendment?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, I don't quite understand all that is included in the Newell amendment. Let me just again repeat for those of you who are listening that we sat down with the members of the media about the concern that they had. We worked out a situation that just clarified what the situation was now. It is not any new prerogatives for the media, nothing is changed for them other than we just put in the rules what has always been there. Unfortunately there was an error made in an amendment last year, I was responsible for that error, I felt responsible for correcting it, that took away some of the rights that they had previously so this merely reinserts what had been the case in the past. It is a simple change. It doesn't really change anything that has presently been the case but it clarifies the situation. I see no problem with that and I don't understand Senator Newell's concern. The Legislature has been founded on openness. We have been recognized nationally for our openness, our willingness to open ourselves to the media. It seems to me that this is just in further recognition of that outstanding quality that we have displayed in Nebraska, the open and accessible.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator DeCamp, do you wish to be recognized?

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, reluctantly, with chagrin and all those things I oppose Senator Newell's amendment, and let me try to explain why. It leaves in great doubt exactly what the news media are allowed to do once they walk into that executive session. Now why am I saying this? Because we have a history in the past of a number of things we would allow the media to do and it was very confused for a long time. In one committee we would say, "Okay, fella, you can sit in the room but you can't report what any of the votes were or you can't report what any of the discussion was or you can't report who said the discussion." The news media is trying, rightly or wrongly, make that judgment yourself, they are trying to clear up that they say if you are going to allow us in the meeting we want to be able to report what you talked about and who said it. So that if Johnny DeCamp says, "God darn it, Loran Schmit, you dumb bunny, you haven't done this right and blah, blah, blah", and kind of get carried away like sometimes happen in executive sessions, they want to be able to say Johnny DeCamp said all these crazy things, put them down. As it is now, we say basically they can't do it. So all I am saying is either