

is today a full-time occupation. And we perhaps spend too much of our time in our office concerned with perpetuating our own careers rather than with serving the people of the State of Nebraska as we were elected to do. I know that that may take many different forms. As Senator Newell and I were just visiting, there is a great interest back home in both of us returning to our respective districts. Some of them would like to see us both return permanently. The facts are that in a legislative body, all too often we get to the point of view or the position that we are irreplaceable, that no matter what we do the public should buy it. The facts are that the Legislature of the State of Nebraska is a favorite whipping boy of most of the press and most of the public, and it is very ironic that about twice a year we get an editorial from the various newspapers that mention that really in all reality Senator so and so who represents this district is a pretty good guy and ought to be paid more money. But then about the next breath you will notice something that says to the effect that the other 48 Senators are really an irresponsible bunch of people and don't deserve any more. And I think that our respective mail would reflect the same kind of thinking. Generally, the constituencies which send us down here support us, but as a whole...as a whole we do not receive broad support. I think that we can look back over the history of the twelve years that I have been here and the general tone that is presented to the public is one of an irresponsible Legislature. Now I don't buy that. I think it is a responsible body, but I think that so long as the public pictures us as being irresponsible it is a waste of time. Why humiliate yourself by going through the wringer one more time? It isn't going to work. As I said earlier, the expenses are in no way equal and a salary, no matter at what level, is not going to take care of those many inequities. But I think the most important thing we should remember is what I mentioned first of all, a legislative body is supposed to be representative and is not supposed to be a full-time job. It is supposed to be a citizen Legislature. We are supposed to be down here a brief period of time, the shorter the period of time the better, and the sooner we return to our home constituencies the more likely we are to represent them well.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have 45 seconds.

SENATOR SCHMIT: I think all too often if we were to increase the salary, increase the expense money, etcetera, it might encourage us to spend additional time down here and would work to the detriment of the entire Legislature.