

March 30, 1981

LB 78

time, and stayed with radio long before my family could afford a television set. At that time during the late forties and the early fifties, radio programming was of a broad mix. There were all kinds of programs to be listened to by my folks living in rural areas or myself as a youngster. In fact, radio was very powerful as far as presenting an image, probably much more powerful than TV because it allows so much for the listener to imagine. The sad thing about this though is that when TV was introduced it was a hot media and it almost ruined radio broadcasting in the United States, at least it became almost unprofitable, and I would like to compliment private radio for being able to make a comeback and making radio a success in America. But it had to do so largely by stylizing its format and presenting largely as you listen to the different stations popular music with spot news items, and that is pretty much what the program material is composed of. Public radio would broaden the format that is being presented. I would like to use as an example, and I think it's one of the best examples in the state, is a radio station that we have in Omaha run by Omaha Central High School, KOIS. And if you take a look at their schedule for the week, there is all kinds of things that you will never hear in private commercial radio. I would just like to read just a sampling of what they present during the week. We have got Kindergarten music. We have got Jazz Revisited. We have got Outdoor Nebraska. We have got Aging in America. We have got Fine Arts Forum. We have got World Report. We have got Mental Health Matters. Even for the rural areas coming out of Omaha, we have Rural Lives, Prairie Home Companion. When you take a listen to radio, sometimes set a stopwatch as to how long a song lasts. Usually a song only lasts for about 2 to 3 minutes. Very seldom will you ever hear a long play album on private or commercial radio largely because it is just too long and because they need to have sponsors in order to be a commercial success. What I am maintaining about LB 78 is that public radio will underwrite the most costly...the least cost effectiveness in terms of private radio programs, programs they couldn't normally pick up because they just couldn't afford to put it on the air because it is too time consuming.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute.

SENATOR WIITALA: In conclusion, I would like to read from another radio that I have that there are 44 states that presently have public radio, and one writer wrote me and said, "I have never heard of problems of governmental control