

April 15, 1981

LB 318

Beutler's kill motion. And the issue very simply is this, what is to be the nature of our educational program in this state? Is it to be a program that is specially weighted...that is specially weighted toward the vocationally oriented, toward those who are in need of special education, and towards the gifted? Or, instead, is our program to be a program that gets down to what you and I regard as very fundamental to the educational process of our young people? And that process very simply is a process that our young people understand what is meant by the English language, they understand through history our heritage, and they understand our way of envisioning a world through the sciences, they understand our relationship in the commonwealth of human beings through foreign languages. In my opinion, the mark of an educated young person is a person who has been inculcated in the humanities, a person who from any background in life, whether he be rich or poor, black, white, or Indian, understands what it means to communicate in the common tongue, knows what it means to appreciate the sciences, knows what it means to be able to reckon in figures, and the like. And I think that is what the public wants its educational program in this country to be. Today more and more members of the public have become increasingly dissatisfied with public education and they are demonstrating their dissatisfaction by placing their children in private schools, and those schools may be preparatory schools, such as Brownell-talbot in Omaha, or they may be Christian schools, so-called Christian schools, such as the Temple Christian Academy in Omaha, or they may be Catholic schools such as Holy Name in Omaha. They can be a variety of different kinds of schools. But parents are beginning to vote on public education by placing their children in private schools. And the longer that you and I continue to tolerate the kinds of departures from public schools by parents with their children, the longer you and I tolerate a weakened public education program, and public education has been one of the real mainstays to American society. We have tried over the years to do our very best for public education. So I rise to oppose LB 318 because, in my opinion, 318 continues to divert us from the mark of providing a fundamental education for our children and instead will emphasize the vocational offerings, the home economics offerings, not as though they are unworthy, and I am not going to... I am not going to complain about their lack of worth, but I am going to elevate the merit of the more traditional straightforward offering. I was involved in a public hearing about a year ago....

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have 30 seconds.

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