

May 4, 1981

LB 561

we gave 40 million dollars to tax relief and property tax. We also gave you millions of dollars back in spendable money from your income tax, yet had the Board of Equalization looked at the fact that we are in this state facing serious issues such as water holding structures, you name it, we are facing them. They could have justified maintaining that balance until this Legislature met to make a priority rating on the uses of state tax dollars. I also remind you that governors have always talked about property tax relief. The last governor I remember who did this seriously was Governor Tiemann. Ever since then the governors have stated to the school boards and to others, you are doing a great job. We are going to help you but that has been a hallow promise and so as a result if we as a body are concerned about the call upon property tax and Senator Newell stated it, where over 50% of the monies that supports local government comes off of property tax and yet we speak and say that we want to relieve that burden, then I think we must make every effort to do this. Last year, as I stated before, when we gave the 40 million dollars to the public schools there was almost a 5% decrease in the call on property tax and I think that is significant. In some cases far greater than that, depending upon the wealth of a school district, that was across the board. Recently we talked about LB 318 which tried to bring in a factor for vocational education. The amount of roney in there sort of frightens some members of this body and I agreed to strike that section of the law saying, I will take a shot at general aid to public schools so we make sure they all get that amount of money.

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute.

SENATOR KOCH: That is what I am attempting to do. I want to make certain that every school that educates children gets some dollar back in relationship to the job they have performed. Now then, if we have to set a new tax rate, so be it, but the State Board of Equalization of the last three years has had the luxury of sitting there and rolling back the income tax and saying, look what we have returned to you, yet, never prioritizing for the people of the State of Nebraska the needs, and I sometimes think that that is not very fair. In fact, I know it is not very fair. I also realize that when we give certain money to various agencies such as the University, I don't criticize that. I support that increase knowing that if we don't give it there, it is going to come out of tuition fees for students and when you start doing that you tax some of them out of the market of a higher education and I would not want to be a party to denying that boy or girl that opportunity. In conclusion I will say to you, if we don't start providing some money at the local level for boys and girls, the univer-