

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Marsh.

SENATOR MARSH: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I think this body needs to know what we really are discussing on this floor. We are discussing the child abuse legislation and trying to separate it from the adult abuse. I have in my hand a communication from the national center on child abuse and neglect, United States Childrens Bureau which is under Health and Human Services of our federal government. "You should know that if the reporting provisions in the child abuse state law are eliminated, the state will be ineligible for the state grant from Health and Human Services. Our state has benefitted for a number of years from these funds which are available again this year. This is a top priority with the administration. This is an important part of the protection within our state. I urge you to adopt the amendment which Senator Landis has offered and I would like to read just one section from the National Committee for Prevention of Child abuse. Kathy Campbell who is executive secretary, "We support the pending Landis amendment to separate the reporting of child abuse and the reporting of elderly abuse. We do not support exemptions for the reporting of child abuse. We would support a motion to indefinitely postpone 335 if the bill cannot be clarified. The adults in our state ask for this legislation, LB 335, but they do not want the legislation at the expense of children. Children under our current law have protection. All persons are responsible for reporting child abuse in our state. I urge you to support Senator Landis' amendment which would separate the adults and the child abuse sections for the benefit of adults but especially for the benefit of the children who currently do have this protection in the law and we not only would be harming children but we also would be losing the support dollars for the child abuse program if we do not adopt Senator Landis' amendment."

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature, the member of the clergy will never report confidential communications made to him or her to the police. No law which the Unicameral may pass will cause the member of the clergy to break one of his or her most sacred vows. Thus when the abuse is discovered by other means after there has been a confidential communication, law enforcement officials could then subject the member of the clergy to criminal prosecution. Now this is the message that I got from the clergy in speaking to them last week and I did not only speak to my pastor but several others in the area of Omaha. I vehemently oppose