

March 15, 1982

LB 202

SENATOR KAHLE: .."Yes, you can be saved. You will be with me in Paradise". But he did not walk off with that cross and go back into society. I guess in my closing moments I would say I would hope that those ministers would be more interested in a man's soul than in his hide. So I think that we should vote this issue down, strengthen up our court system and hopefully it would do some good. Thank you.

SENATOR LAMB: The Chair recognizes Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I think we are going to all have a chance to probably express our feelings and I want to be very brief in expressing mine and I will support LB 202. However, I support it recognizing the fact that there are instances where I definitely feel that some individuals who commit a heinous crime probably are deserving of the death penalty. The problem I have always found with the death penalty is where do you draw the line and where do you distinguish between those that are put to death and those that are not and it is that gray area that eventually has to be reached in any legislation that causes me the great concern I have in the fear that at some point the possibility is always going to exist that an innocent person or someone who is maybe poor and unable to defend themselves properly may receive the death penalty while someone else who has committed an even more heinous crime is let free. And it seems to me that our judicial system has not reached that state of perfection where we can distinguish to the minutest detail those that are deserving and those not deserving the death penalty and that has been a big concern of mine. Now Senator Hefner has talked about some of these cases we all know about where individuals have been killed and we are all angered and upset and want to do something about that and I want to give you an instance that is the instance that changed my mind about the death penalty and I hope it will mean something to you as well. When I was younger in high school, I was a paper boy and worked my way through high school and one of those on my route was a young girl who unfortunately was missing, this is maybe about ten years ago, and we didn't know what happened to her and at that time we weren't sure, maybe she just ran away, but she was missing. Pretty soon from missing we found out that it went into weeks and months and she was gone for a long period of time and then the fear was there that something terrible had happened to her, that this wasn't like her, and that something awful had probably been committed and we were all very concerned. She was a friend. We waited and anxiously to try and find her and finally one day her remains were found in a field

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