

March 29, 1982

LB 603

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President, this has been a bill that in the beginning I thought I would vote against, then I thought I would vote for it. Now I am between a rock and a hard place. It is difficult if you vote for a bill like this to go back to your constituents who are unemployed and who are only making 12, 14, 15 thousand a year to explain all of the debate that you have listened to on this since before lunch and after lunch. And the news media may or may not tell all of the debate and not even all of my constituents will take the newspaper because many of them cannot afford it. When you get it on television and radio it is such capsule form they can't possibly tell all the information we have received. So I think what I am going to do is this. I am going to vote yes to advance it today and then I am going to send out a letter to all the judges and ask them that if they don't get the salary increase, is it going to force them to resign and go back into private practice? And at the same time I am going to wait to hear from my constituents in District 9 and see if any of them have anything to say, if they write me or call me and say, I am for it or against it. If they call me, I am going to explain to them the arguments that I have heard here on the floor and I am going to rely on the judges and their answers as to what their feeling will be if they do not get the salary increase. It could be argued, you get what you pay for but that would be an insult to everyone of us on the floor here considering it is \$4800 but in a lot of our cases including mine I think that is probably all we are worth, some of us. So I will vote today to advance it from General to Select but I don't know what I will do until after I get a response from the judges themselves and from my own constituents. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President and colleagues, there are a couple of important facts in relation to this bill that I am not sure have been sufficiently considered or sufficiently emphasized in this debate. The first and I think the most important are the ramifications of killing this bill or turning down this request for a salary increase, and that is if we do that because of the way the Nebraska Constitution is drafted, why we will be denying the judiciary an increase of any kind for two and a half years. If we turn this bill down today it is going to be January 1st of 1985, two and a half years from now before they will get any increase of any kind. Now consider what the consumer price index and what inflation is going to do to the purchasing power of the dollar in the next two and a half years