

April 1, 1982

LB 761

finally are completed. "State and federal funding will even be pulled from other projects if necessary to complete work on the North Freeway and Storz Expressway Nutter told the Sun. Those projects have the highest priority with this Department." Highest means acme or apex, that above which nothing else is placed. Such being the case, that means this particular project should be given top priority by the Legislature so the funding that is being asked is the modest \$26 million which the city notified its Congressional delegation it would need to get a good start on this road. However, when asked to state a minimum amount that would allow them to start, the city said \$13 million. So if you don't want to give the \$26 million, I will let you force me reluctantly to accept a mere \$13 million. But when that \$13 million was mentioned as a minimum, it was determined that Washington may not want to come up with this amount, so what is the absolute minimum that could be accepted and no minimum was stated beyond the \$13 million but members of the Congressional delegation from Omaha thought they had an arrangement with Congress to get at least \$6 million. So if we can't get the thirteen we will take the six and I think everybody will be happy with that, and the reason there will be happiness is because the Director of the Public...of the Street Department in Omaha, Jim Suttle had made a number of grandiose boasts at the end of last year. He said that no matter what happened in the way of protests and objections, the city would be turning dirt this spring. He also said that bids for this project would be opened in December of 1982. Now you know that the bids were not opened in 1982, no dirt is going to be turned this spring, and as a matter of fact there has been a declaration that nothing is going to be done as far as construction on the North Freeway. I think when you have a dedicated employee such as Mr. Suttle who has put himself on the record, his integrity as an engineer, his ability as a prognosticator of what Congress is liable to do with reference to the appropriation of money, that man should not be allowed to swing slowly in the wind to borrow a Watergate allusion. I think what you should do is consider seriously this amendment, and here is how you can fix me. Some people have said repeatedly, and they are correct, that I have been opposed to completion of the North Freeway project. What better way, what better way to put me in the wind to swing slowly over a lighted fire, if you will, than to provide the money to complete this project which the State Department of Roads itself has said is its top priority. What I am trying to do is give the opportunity for everybody to get something from this. What will I get? I will get kicked in the teeth. I will be shown in my community that there is nothing I can do to stop a project that I think is detrimental and it will also show

9895