

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Based on your understanding and I realize that you are a new person in the Legislature so I'm not going to ask you about specifics in the law, but based on your perception or feeling about this commission, what do you think its purpose is, the Mexican-American Commission I'm talking about now.

SENATOR R. PETERSON: Well it has been a commission to gather and disseminate information, to conduct hearings, conferences and special studies for problems and programs for the Mexican-Americans.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Do you think that Mexican-Americans in Nebraska have problems because of the fact that they are Mexican-Americans, that there is a negative attitude toward them on the part of some other Nebraskans?

SENATOR R. PETERSON: I don't feel that here, Senator Chambers. I have spent years, since 1946, every winter going to southern Texas where right now there is probably 85% of the population is Mexicans.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I'm asking you about the condition in Nebraska because they do have problems in Texas and other states along the Mexican border but here is the question I am asking you. Do you feel that there are problems of discrimination that impact on employment, education, housing and other aspects of the life of Mexican-Americans in Nebraska?

SENATOR R. PETERSON: Senator Chambers, I don't think so. I am not aware of it. There isn't up in my area that I know of.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: If somebody could persuade you that there are Mexican-Americans in other parts of the state who face problems of discrimination, would that change your attitude about cutting the funds for this program?

SENATOR R. PETERSON: No, Senator Chambers, I think there is a number of programs and I'm just speaking of three and there is about thirty agencies I think could function well on half of what they are doing.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So in order that I can understand you very clearly you are saying that despite the fact that there might be problems of discrimination against Mexican-Americans in this state and that as you stated this Commission is to gather material, disseminate information and deal with those problems, you still would be in favor of cutting this program knowing all of that?

SENATOR R. PETERSON: Yes, Senator Chambers, and I'm for