

April 1, 1982

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these savings in the wrong place. Senator Fenger asks us to be prudent and to be honest men and women in this affair. We are going to be prudent, we are going to be honest. I think what we need to do is compare the state employees with their salaries and benefits to all the states that are contiguous to Nebraska. This would not be putting our head in the sand but be lifting it out and staring at the facts when it comes to this issue. The facts say that Nebraska is lowest among those contiguous states. As far as belt tightening by both rural and urban citizens, the state employees have been tightening their belts for a long time. Their position is not unlike other public servants and it has been a historic problem. The Governor has probably done a very good job in melting down the employee force of the state employees already rendering the state numerous dollars in savings. Fourteen hundred state employees have lost their jobs in the name of savings and that may be fine and well, but to go after this group with a zero percent raise is uncalled for. When the citizens of Nebraska think about their state employees, I hope that they hope as I do that these employees are talented, that they represent quality people. But if we continue along the road that we are going not recognizing their economic needs, but even worse cutting back on their real wages, I am afraid that we are going to have to give up those job requisites of having quality and being talented people. I would like to remind this body and I would like to remind the state also that not only has there been a cutback in the work force but many of the state employees have assumed responsibilities that have gone beyond their historic forty to fifty hour work week routines. We need to think about the sacrifice that they are already making in the name of saving the state's taxpayers' monies. I guess I have nothing further to say, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: I would like to announce that under the south balcony is Cindy Hefner from Omaha, daughter of Senator Hefner, and her friend, Patricia Moscrey. Would you stand and be recognized, please. Welcome to the Legislature. We will keep track of your father for you. Senator Higgins is next.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President and colleagues, I think when I speak it is going to be useless because I have before me a copy of the Lincoln Star morning paper that says, "Fenger, who also sponsored the amendment dropping the motor vehicle surcharge, said, Thone has the 25 votes he needs for his proposal". So it looks like no matter how many people stand up for the employees, Governor Thone has already gotten the 25 votes he needs to defeat the