

October 30, 1981

PRESIDENT: The motion fails. We will proceed then with the debate on the second amendment, the DeCamp amendment. Senator Newell, I have you as the next speaker. Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to oppose the DeCamp motion and I think it is important that we analyze just what we are saying here, what the precedent is. And as I told Johnny earlier, this is kind of surprising coming from him. You know, he is the kind of guy who generally sees an opportunity everywhere and he sort of had a change of heart here and I can appreciate that. Times change and things change and needs change and obviously Johnny is not unable to change but the question that comes to mind is, is this the kind of precedent we want to be setting? Is this the kind of message that we want to send our constituents? The message that Johnny proposes is quite different than what Johnny articulates. You see, Johnny says, "Look, we don't want extraneous issues like the North Freeway or, you know, questions of who should set the tax rates," you know, these are extraneous issues. But what Johnny is really saying is that the Legislature should abrogate its responsibility to assess the needs, the desires and to make alterations what is proposed by the President of the United States, I mean, the Governor of the State of Nebraska. The analogy here is very similar to that of the presidency and on foreign policy issues it is said that the President has, in fact, total power to negotiate with countries but the Senate and the Constitution of the United States make it very clear that the Senate has advise and consent powers. The House of Representatives of that same U.S. Constitution has the authority, all money bills, all appropriations must begin in the House. That is what the Constitution says. We have a one house system here in Nebraska but it is patterned very similarly to the federal government and it is clear that appropriation measures are to start here. They are not to start in the Governor's office. He prepares a budget. We prepare a budget and then we present him another budget, the final completed budget, and he may veto it. That is his power, to veto. Now what we are saying here, what Johnny's proposal very simply is, is that we are not going to use our authority to change, to make modifications, to assess what the Governor is proposing but instead what we are going to do is either approve it or reject it. Frankly that is an abrogation of our authority, our responsibility and I think that it speaks very poorly of this Legislature. We have the right and the responsibility to make these assessments as a legislative body, collectively, and that is what we ought to be about doing. The Constitution is very clear. You cannot intro-