

briefly with Senator Warner. I am not entirely unsympathetic with what the committee has done and I would like to explain a little bit further why. At the present time, some of you are aware that there are \$17,716,000 in that budget. I have met with the Ethanol Authority and I have recommended that the authority, as an entity, purchase the Hastings Ethanol plant which is under the receivership of the FSLIC, and that it be purchased and held as an entity for the people of the State of Nebraska. I have discussed it a little bit with Senator Warner and I don't want to...he can refer to his own beliefs about it, his own convictions, but at least I got the impression from Senator Warner that I could go ahead and suggest that they do that, and I believe the authority is in the law at the present time. I am going to meet this afternoon with the Ethanol Authority. I am going to be quite insistent that the Ethanol Authority does purchase that plant. Now there are a number of others who will be bidding on the plant, and there are those who have said and who have told me that they feel very strongly that the state should not bid in competition with private entities. Let me say at this time that it is my conviction that the State of Nebraska Ethanol Authority represent the 40 to 50 thousand farmers who contribute the money to the authority, and the first and highest responsibility of the authority is to those individuals who contribute the money. It was contributed for the purpose of developing and enhancing the ethanol industry in this state. Senator Warner, myself, and Senator Goodrich, Senator Chambers, are the only legislators who are here now who were here when we started the Gasohol Committee back in 1971. It has been a long slow road. I have made it clear to anyone who will listen that to the extent it is possible for me, I will insist that the monies be invested for the maximum benefit of all of the people of the State of Nebraska and not to personally enrich any certain entity. I will say also that I have placed a bid on the plant, more than, I believe six or eight months ago, a bid which I believe was instrumental in what might have been a fire sale for the plant. I will be bidding on that plant myself on Friday if necessary for the benefit of all of the farmers in this state but, hopefully, the Ethanol Authority will, themselves, place a bid. I will come back to this body if we need additional help, and I have also told Senator Warner that if the Ethanol Authority does not purchase this plant, then as much as it may grieve me to admit that, I don't know if there is reason for the authority to continue to exist, and the same goes for the Gasohol Committee. Now those of you who know me know how near and dear those entities are to my heart.