

early 1970s; 1971, as Chairman of the Ag Committee, a bill came before the committee which address the sale...which addressed school lands, principally rentals. Very honestly, I was not at all acquainted with the project or the aspect of that bill at that time, but I took it upon myself to become a little more familiar, found out that in my opinion the school lands were substantially undervalued, and the rental income from those lands was minuscule to say the least. Senator DeCamp was a member of the committee, and took a look at it, and in later years then came back with several bills which did substantially alter the process of appraisal whereby we determined the value of school lands. I will say also that at that time there were on the Board of Lands and Funds several individuals who realized the terrible inequity that was being vested upon the school children of this state because of the lack of properly appraised values, and they did work with the committee to make some substantial adjustments. As I recall, and again these are numbers which are readily obtainable, we were receiving less than several million dollars, in the early seventies, from the rental income from school lands. Also at that time we were...there was no such thing as in lieu of tax. But when we took into account the various factors that ought to be utilized to determine the value of school lands, the rental income on the school lands escalated anywhere from five to ten times what had been the normal rental income, depending upon the part of the state in which you were located and the type of land which you had. There were also a number of other factors that were brought to bear, which then helped to determine the true value of those school lands. And we also, of course, became more aware of the bonus bidding procedure, which is something which most of you in the western part of the state are fully familiar with. As I recall, after we had addressed the issue of appraisal and the values were increased substantially, we then, under Senator DeCamp's prodding, decided to adopt an in lieu of tax proposal. And that in lieu of tax proposal was drawn rather loosely, I would guess, but it was drawn at 143 percent of the appraised value of the land to be returned to the schools of that state. And I recall, a little vaguely, that the reason that was given for that 143 percent was because of the fact that the other subdivisions of government received no income from the school lands, and this was an attempt to reimburse to the taxpayers, through the school system, an amount that was equivalent to what would have been received for taxes on that land had it been, in fact, on the tax rolls. That became law, and of course there has been some recent controversy about that,