

February 23, 1990

for that reason, I will be voting against confirmation.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Wesely, please, followed by Senator Goodrich, Senator Ashford, then Senator Schmit.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. President, and members, I, too, rise in opposition to the confirmation of Ann Spence, and I do so with some reluctance but also with some very firm feelings, and I understand Senator Ashford's comments and many others that have called me that have confirmed their good feelings about Ann Spence. But let me tell you a little bit more about the situation. First off, the Investment Council is no small appointment. It is, perhaps, one of the most important appointments any Governor can make. Let me tell you how much money they control. There are state operating funds they deal with on a day-to-day basis totalling somewhere around \$850 million. They deal with pension funds and investment of our pension funds, which is the future of many public employees in this state, of \$1.1 billion, and then they handle trust funds of \$150 million. In other words, the Investment Council, those five individuals, have determination over about \$2.1 billion. That is a significant amount of money. I have suggested in the past the Investment Council should have the very best people on the council and should be independent from the Governor in terms of who they hire and fire in terms of consultants. That was a piece of legislation this Legislature in its wisdom decided to kill, and I understand that, but at the same time, I maintain that that council ought to have the very best people, ought to be able to be independent, and have the judgment and background and experience to make the very best choices for making investments dealing with \$2.1 billion. It is the least we can expect from that sort of a position. Now the committee, I think, and I really want to commend the Banking Committee for this, recognized in the hearing, if you look at the transcript, and I hope you will have a chance to look at it, if you do, the article I sent out did take some excerpts from it, you will see that she simply was very honest about the fact she didn't have the background. She hoped that she would learn on the job. Well, on-the-job training to deal with a \$2 billion investment question is not exactly a safe way to go, and safety is one of our foremost concerns dealing with that amount of money, dealing with, again, the pension funds, and trust funds, and the operating funds of the State of Nebraska. This is no place for on-the-job training. We need people that know what they are doing, that can come into the job, and have the skills, ability,