

production system. And it was this gentleman's opinion that it was basically religious, historical in nature in that all of the religions in that part of the world were based upon the Earth and the things that came from the Earth, and the things that controlled what happened on the Earth. And in doing that, he said, that in that part of the world, in Asia in general, from...irrespective of country borders, that there was a caste system that had developed in which the highest, the most regarded people were the intellectuals, the priests, the teachers in the schools. The next of their five castes that they had were the farmers because they worked with nature and did those things that were regarded to be at least semireligious. And, besides, he said, they feed us all. Below those were the artisans, the masons, the writers, people with professional talents. The fourth caste were the business people, because, he said, after all they only work with money. And the fourth (sic), as is typical all over the world irregardless of society, were those folks that actually did the work, the laborers. I think that gives a little bit of an indication of how it is in other parts of the world, and why it's essential today that we at least spend a few hours in commemorating those people who put the food on our table. I would urge your adoption of this resolution.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Dierks, please.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I just wanted to stand to affirm my position on the resolution and to remind you that along with the agricultural production in this state we need to remember the animal part of it. We are, I think, the second leading producer of beef calves in the nation, statewide. We raise close to 2 million beef calves per year, that many are born. It becomes almost frightening when we look at the fact that only 2 percent of our population today is on the farm, where when the nation was founded it was closer to 98 percent. We have, I think, out there still a great frontier, and many of the people involved with agriculture in rural Nebraska today are really frontiersmen, and they have to be very adept at a number of things, including mechanics, agronomy, they have to understand a certain amount of veterinary medicine, they have to be almost attorneys, at times, to handle the situations that come up on their farms and ranches. I think there's a real challenge out there for those who are still involved with agriculture. And I would just like to echo my support for the resolution. Thank you.