

depreciable items in a business which you use up then you discard. They're not jetsam and flotsam, they shouldn't be. But when we come into this body and publicly make declarations that indicate that our young people are not very important and their labor is worth next to nothing, a message is conveyed to them. But we should keep in mind that this does not deal only with young people, others work for minimum wage. And what Senator Robinson should consider is that it's easy to take two things which coexist at the same time and try to create a cause and effect relationship, but because two things exist together does not mean that one caused the other, or because one follows the other, it does not mean that the one following was necessarily caused by the one preceding. So if he wants to talk about the rural economy and it being different from that in the cities, you have to look at what is happening to the farm or the agricultural aspect of it, Senator Robinson. Small towns are drying up and dying in rural Nebraska not because of the minimum wage. The problem exists in agriculture not necessarily because of poor farming practices with reference to planting, harvesting and selling. The problem that started in agriculture in this country can be traced to a period a few years ago when there was a tremendous amount of speculation in land. Farmers were encouraged to purchase land, then develop equity and use that to purchase additional land.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** One minute.

**SENATOR CHAMBERS:** They were building a house of cards...this is a mixed metaphor, composed of land. Every new piece of land you bought had less of what you owned in that land and you continued to build and build until this whole structure of debt collapsed. And when the land market collapsed, all of the farming economy was hurt and it has never recovered and it never will. Now there are other economic factors that have intervened. So if you're going to talk about the rural economy, remember rural does not just mean farm. But when the farm economy fails, the small towns dependent on it will fail. So talk about all those things before you try to attribute too much of that to the minimum wage. This, as Senator Hall said, is a modest proposal. We are not going to rescue agriculture by diminishing the application of the minimum wage. So I hope you will defeat Senator Robinson's motion despite how vociferously he advocates it.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** The next speaker is Senator Lynch. Is Senator