

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

January 20, 1999 LR 16

But if you're outside the penitentiary, haven't been convicted of a felony, you're qualified to be in the Legislature. But there's going to be so much talk, I'm sure, this session about values of one kind or another, the Legislature must do this, fighting against criminals, yet our conduct will not withstand scrutiny. I feel the Legislature's conduct is like that hole in the baseboard that Abraham Lincoln talked about in the office of one of his colleagues. He said, my colleague's office has very few furnishings: a battered desk, an old chair, a rathole in the baseboard that bears looking into. Our conduct bears looking into, and if my female colleagues are offended, that's tough. As the defender of the downtrodden, I don't do it because people that I tried to defend always ask me to do it, or because they'll understand or because they will be appreciative. I do it, Senator Cudaback, because there is something inside of me that compels me to do it. I will not bring this issue up every day that we're in session. I will not always give forewarning of the fact that I'm going to bring it up. But as long as we are in session, the wrong that was done will be hovering over this body. One thing that I want to do by rule, which we shouldn't have to do, is say that once an individual gets elected to a position in this Legislature, he or she will not take another position which requires a vote. Some things should not have to be done by rule.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Where is the common sense? Where is the decency? It's lacking in this Legislature. Or is it that we're just so blind, that we are so insensitive that we just do not see? I will not allow my conscience to become seared, I will not allow my eyes to be blinded, and every time I see something that I believe is wrong, when the time is appropriate, in my opinion, I will address it. Senator Landis, sorry I had to use your "wagon" for this "ride", but I have to take advantage of the opportunities as they present themselves.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator. There being no other lights on, the Chair recognizes Senator Landis to close.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you. I don't normally close, but it's...it's kind of necessary to remind us what's at hand here.