

January 30, 1975

become as vital to the reaching of justice as the rungs of a ladder do to a window. Without the ladder you cannot reach the window. Without the statutes you cannot reach justice. Each step of the ladder must be used in order to reach the goal. Each step of the statutes must be used in order to reach justice. One step missed, the ladder collapses. One step missed in the jurisdictional process the rights collapse. This is the very nature of the laws in our society. Now should the Legislature decide today to violate the statutes, which it can do, or skip a rung of the ladder, then this question will be heard in the arena of suspended rules. Should the Legislature proceed to attempt to climb the ladder to justice, without the rules, and the ladder does not collapse, it would lean and wobble out of recognition. Any justice that would be reached on the wobbly ladder would be shabby, at best, and chaos at worst. In this case it could be described in no other way than rule by men. The members of the Legislature would sit in this room with guidance of no kind and individually decide a precedent for our government. That would be deplorable. Individually I have been counselled and I state to you, my colleagues, that no court in our land would ever hear an appeal from our legislative action to follow Nebraska law. I have been further counselled that if the Nebraska Legislature violates the law it may be that any court in our land would be willing to hear a case based on the violation of jurisdiction and due process. The Legislature must follow the law. It should not permit itself to be above or beyond the law. The Legislature creates these laws and it can change them. But it cannot ignore them. I plead with you, fellow Senators, for the sake of this Legislature and the legislatures to come that you support Senator Warner's motion and that you defeat Senator Cavanaugh's amendment.

PRESIDENT: Chair recognizes Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'm sure that all 49 of us in here have agonized over this decision as much as any and quite properly so. Because 50 or 100 or 200 years from now this decision will probably be the law or the test that will be looked to for some unknown Senator Jones, or Carpenter or whatever, who also has a contested election. What we do here will probably, in terms of its effect, live longer than the statutes we pass from day to day. So I think we have to be most careful in our decision. We've heard constitutional talk, we've had talk of the statutes, procedure, rules, it's all highly complex. I'm sure some of us have different interpretations and understandings of what's been said. I am going to vote for the Cavanaugh motion and I expect to be in the minority position. But I do want to make it clear why I'm voting for that. At this point, after the Legislature's been in session and studying this matter for X number of days, I have yet to have the opportunity to ever even look at the ballots in question or any other substantive questions in the case. The entire issue revolves around a bond. Now we have had a lot of questions answered, but it's the questions that have never been answered that are plaguing me and driving me to support the Cavanaugh motion. For example, I have never had it adequately explained to me how when the statute