

March 30, 1983

LB 565

But for the here and the now, I suggest that the bill is necessary and that the kill motion should be defeated.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Cullan, did you wish to speak to the kill motion? Then Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, I rise at this point in time in support of the kill motion subject to perhaps a question of Senator Johnson. I would state initially that I believe it very unwise of the Legislature to cloak in secrecy the telephone calls and expenses of members of the Legislature. I think it is a very legitimate public concern and one which we should not hide under LB 565 by providing this exclusion for this body. I do agree to a large extent with the discussion that has occurred previously particularly the remarks of Senator Johnson, and I think the confidentiality of our communications must, in fact, be preserved. There is, however, a significant difference between protecting the confidentiality of those with whom we correspond and communicate with and what is contained in LB 565. The public, in my mind, has the right to know whether Sam Cullan is calling Hemingford or Alliance or Omaha or Neligh or anywhere else and whether Sam Cullan is calling Las Vegas and San Francisco and Jamaica or wherever else he might like to call. So I think that the destination of our phone calls ought to be open to the press and that the public ought to have access to that information. What I would propose is that the Legislature make available its records deleting from the records the telephone numbers so that our calls would be confidential but we would be subject to some scrutiny and I would propose that as a compromise. I would like to ask Senator Johnson if he would accept that compromise which I think meets the legitimate concerns of the media and also the legitimate concerns of the Legislature in protecting the confidentiality of our communications.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Just a minute. I heard this bill and as you will recall, all I said was....(microphone not on).

SPEAKER NICHOL: Just a minute, Senator Johnson. Senator Johnson, just a moment, please. Okay, Senator Cullan, did you wish to ask him a question?

SENATOR CULLAN: Yes, would Senator Johnson yield to a question?

SPEAKER NICHOL: Okay.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: (Microphone not activated)...quickly.