

January 31, 1974

SENATOR WARNER: No. \$250,000,000?

SENATOR STAHLER: No. I mean \$2,500,000, correction.

SENATOR WARNER: I see that the estimates of the eventual building is \$2½ million that's correct, but for this year I believe the Governor's budget has \$20,000 in it. I do not know what the Budget Committee would recommend. This is merely planning money, but the Historical Society is in the position that they cannot go into the next phase of planning as required now without knowing the site where the building is.. proposed building would be located if it is to be constructed. So we're not, all we're doing is preserving or indicating that that would be an appropriate site for such a building if and when the Legislature appropriates the money for it's construction.

SENATOR STAHLER: Senator Warner, the reason I'm questioning this and certainly I'm not in basic opposition to more space for the Historical Society, but the question I have is we have this mansion right across the street where they want to locate this building and I think for \$150,000 that mansion could be put back in good repair, and it's got considerable square footage in it and I think it has already been designated as a national historical landmark and I'm wondering what's going to happen to that mansion and why we can't give consideration to refurbishing bringing it back up to shape and utilizing that space and possibly if necessary have an additional building, if needed on that land. I just wonder if we could stop and give some consideration to this. I'm not trying to stop the building of necessary buildings if indeed there is a good purpose, but I don't think that anyone is paying enough attention to that mansion right across the street from what you're speaking. I've been through every square foot of it. It was built with concrete and steel. One of the first buildings in Lincoln ever so constructed and I know it has considerable square footage and I think it itself would be a historical monument well worthy of keeping, and I just wonder how much consideration's been given to utilizing this building.

PRESIDENT: That's the Ferguson Mansion. Senator Warner, do you care to respond?

SENATOR WARNER: Yes, Senator Stahl, I think that as I understand, that they have looked at numerous buildings as possibilities that could be remodeled. As I recall, the Ferguson Mansion as has been identified would require substantial repairs in any event, but I do not believe it's appropriate as a museum space for the storage and exhibit of historical items as normally you would think of for a museum. Now, as a historical home to the degree that the museum pieces could be displayed in that kind of an atmosphere, I think it's fine, but I'm sure that the building is not of a nature that's either design or construction to serve as the principal space for a museum. Also, I believe the only land we.. I don't believe the state owns that whole block, I think we just own half of the block as I recall. If you were to make additional construction of additional space that is there, again, we would have the same parking problem that they are already faced with. And I think that one of the frequent complaints that you hear from people coming out of state is from the Capitol. They can't find a place to park as a visitor, or a museum it's school kids. Certainly, the location of the building ought to be where there is ample space to provide visitors with parking for not only the museum but for