

SENATOR MURPHY: Are you talking about a seperate bill or about 326?

SENATOR LUEDTKE: I'm talking about this bill.

SENATOR MURPHY: Is 326 incorporated in this...is it going to integrate with the amendment that you are preparing?

SENATOR LUEDTKE: Is what?

SENATOR MURPHY: Is LB326 that we just advanced on the floor going to be tailored into what you're talking about?

SENATOR LUEDTKE: I don't think that 326 will have anything directly to do with it. It may be patterned and fit into it and that can be done and that may be another reason for getting this bill across the board as rapidly as possible.

SENATOR MURPHY: I would think that 326 would integrate with this Senator and should be considered.

SENATOR LUEDTKE: Then it would be well to move this bill along as quickly as possible, that is right.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the legislature, I want to thank first of all Senator Luedtke and the Judiciary Committee, because when the committee on agriculture decided to introduce this bill we did it hurriedly and we did it because of the result of the hearings that we held at the urging of Senator Carpenter who advised my committee that we could do that which we felt necessary to get to the root of the problem, that was plaguing agriculture. We held these hearings and I must confess that I have been called many things but a windmill is a new one, and I don't object to it but I do think that the judiciary committee has done an excellent job of putting this bill together. I think that with the cooperation they they have in the committee council of agriculture, that we have a bill here which will do the thing that was most apparent and the hearings we held starting December 28th to try and determine why there was a tremendous price spread on the live price of cattle and hogs and the retail price of meat. Each time we had witnesses before that committee we heard the repeated testimony that when the price of livestock falls the retail price does not come down. As a result we decided to do some work of our own and we determined that even though the price of livestock had fallen by as much as 40% very rarely did the price of the retail cuts drop by more than 10%. Now admittedly and we have gathered some data which I can have reproduced for those of you who are interested which shows the price spread for the past three months. Starting December 5th, this was one of the lowest times for livestock prices in Nebraska. Then we went through the first part of January which they experienced a little bit of a boom. In most cases there was very little relation between the price of livestock and the price of the retail cuts. I think that as I have indicated on the floor before there is a monopoly in the food and retail industry just as there is a monopoly in the oil companies. This bill which I said will be introduced at the request of the Ag. Committee does not just touch upon the problem of agriculture alone. It establishes within the department an anti-trust division of the Attorney Generals department and this will reach into every area where a monopoly