

March 13, 1974

SENATOR KENNEDY: Excuse me, again, are we on the amendments yet?

PRESIDENT: Still speaking on the Syas amendment, yes, sir. On the Syas amendment to LB649. The Chair's almost afraid to ask if you're all through debating it. All right, if you're all through debating the issue then. Senator Syas, may close. Senator Syas is now closing on his amendment. To LB649.

SENATOR SYAS: Okay. I wish to say though initially something that nothing to do with the amendment that I offered. That I'm a registered Republican and I do follow most the time with Republican but there's one good thing. I'm not infallible and neither is the party I represent but there's one good thing, I'm not like Senator Mahoney that switches every time he thinks it's to his political advantage to be on one side or the other. I stick, I sometimes I loft some awful battles by doing so. Now, Senator Cavanaugh asked an interesting question and he says...he referred to...I thought...he referred that I was trying to wreck the Constitution or something and that he was on the Constitution's side. I like to say to Senator Cavanaugh where do you find in the Constitution federal or state where political parties are mentioned and was the intent of our founding fathers to have political parties at all. The answer, if you're aware of it, which I don't know if you are or not, is no. Now, all I'm saying here that in the State of Nebraska, for instance, I am informed by Mr. Beermann who I asked over the noon hour, there are over 30,000 registered Independents. And I'm not about, even though they may be a minority and are, in the State of Nebraska, I'm not about to say to them and maybe you are, Senator Mahoney, maybe you're about to say to them you cannot file, run for any...the Legislature. That's the thing I'm trying to fix up with this amendment and if you want some other way of putting the amendment on, that's all right with me. I merely am saying, go ahead and file as a Republican. Go ahead and file as a Democrat. If I would run, I would probably file as a Republican but I think that the person that does not choose to belong to one of the parties or any other party has a perfect constitutional right, Senator Cavanaugh, to not be forced to do so. I do not think that we can take a constitutional right to me away from a person because he does not belong to a political party. I merely...that's the only point I'm trying to prove here. Now, are you aware, Senator Cavanaugh, that if this bill...or this amendment does not hold and you go back to the original bill...and you might...this Legislature might do that. But I certainly, I think, pointed the way. Are you aware of no Independent even by petition can get on the ballot. Now, we'll leave...we know they can't in the Primary but they can't even in the general election unless there is a vacancy. And if you go to a partisan Legislature, there'll always be a Democrat and a Republican because the parties will see that they have a candidate on each side regardless of the odds. Even Senator Mahoney will not get to run unopposed any more. Are you aware, Senator Cavanaugh, that you can't even file for the Legislature if there's two already there by petition? With that type of a situation, I think that we should vote for the amendment or some type of amendment that would certainly open this thing up to others than those who belong to the two major political parties and open it up to the Independents. And if you want to vote against this, okay.....

(End of Belt #4A)