

April 9, 1974

stage and the bids are ready to be let today or tomorrow. Now these cottages of proposed construction are of hexagonal shape. And each of these six cottages will hold eighteen of the patients. The rooms will be in sort of a triangular order and these has been complaints and I don't know how sound this is. But this cottage construction or this architect's design is not a wild dream. This was based on the advice of people who are knowledgeable in the field, people who are considered to be experts in the field. It was based upon examination of other structures in other states, notably Kentucky, and the plan is considered to be sound in every respect. However, there is a group that apparently persuaded Senator Stahmer that if the shape or the construction or the design now proposed by the architect was accepted, that they would sue the state and halt construction. Now in this speaker's argument, this amendment was adopted the other night and there were very few people here. And I've got to get this amendment off because if we don't we're going to have to start all over again. I'd wish you'd take a look at that amendment and ask yourself if you're an architect whether or not you could design plans that would be foolproof and not subject to the threat of other court suit. And another thing, if we're going to start construction and every time we have a design when construction is about to start or bids are about to be let, if somebody comes along and says I'll sue you and if we then have to change, we'll never get anything done. We can stop the state office building, the racetrack, the Omaha office building, we can do anything, and stop construction anytime anyone wants to complain. Now, let them sue. Now, this is a part in my own honest judgment is an attempt on the part of a group who do not like to see any progress or any progressive made at the state home. Because there's a lawsuit pending against the Beatrice State Home to close it down or an effort to close it down because not taking proper care of the children down there. Or the people down there, children and otherwise. Now, everytime we try to get some construction going there to improve the home, there's always a lot of antagonism and a lot of effort made to stop this construction, keep the home in poor condition so that the complaints made against it, the allegations made against it in the lawsuit, can be sustained and that they justifiable. Now this is a sad situation. I've always helped the people in the Nebraska group and the Lomar group. I voted for a big appropriation here that Senator Stahmer came through with last week at the last minute to help the Omaha group. I believe it was out of deficiency. I have always helped them and I don't...I absolutely resent this meddling in the state home and the surreptitious manner, in the secret skulking manner going around in corridors and getting someone to go around and get somebody in the Legislature to plug their amendment to bills at this late hour. Now, time is almost up. If we don't get this changed by noon, it's too late. And we'll be sitting here, this project has already been delayed a year, construction costs have gone up. It'll be delayed another year because we're going to have to waste all the architect's fees. We're going to have to throw the designs away and start all over again and have an architect come up with something that will fit this. The spaces, the cottages and the spaces, listen to this, such cottages and the spaces therein shall be of geometrical form most prevalent in the structures clients will be occupying after their release. Now, many of these people are probably not going to be released because they are very severely mentally retarded. But I don't know where they're going to be