

March 9, 1979

LB 359

\$12,000 to an individual farmer, albeit for a small dam or something else, this is for terraces and grade stabilization by the way, or is it more equitable to use that money for area wide conservation projects? Now Senator Dworak mentioned one time he wants to put more money into this bill. Well, that is a new one on me if Senator Dworak wants to spend more money for anything, but in the case that he does, I want to suggest this, so what is he going to do? Triple it? If you spend a million five hundred thousand, you are going to build 30 dams instead of 10 across the State of Nebraska? I have flown this state for thirty years. We already have thousands of small structures, most of them constructed through cooperative efforts of the ASCS and the individual private owner. You have to have cooperation between individuals. We still have ASCS funds available, albeit they are being reduced. The federal government has also recognized that there is a limit to the amount of money that can be spent on this kind of project. I want to say as I have said many times before, any good farmer is going to use the maximum amount of soil conservation practices that he can possibly employ...

PRESIDENT: One minute, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...because he has an economic reason for doing so. I have used cost-share practices on my farm and I am proud of the work we have done. I've planted thousands of trees, miles of terraces and lots of dams but I think that I speak from personal experience when I say this Legislature nor will any other Legislature in succeeding years be able to appropriate enough money to make the project worthwhile on an individual farm by farm basis. Far better to spend the money in a single development fund where you can keep an eye on it, where you have technical people who are in control of it, where you have responsible people to monitor it and where, hopefully, the benefits will be spread over a larger group of people. I have no quarrel with Senator Marsh with her motion to kill the bill. I have no quarrel with Senator Bereuter when he introduced the bill. I was concerned because of the dilution of the resources at that time but I decided to give it a chance to operate. Agreeable, it hasn't had very long but I want to tell you this. It is better to nip an unfavorable wasteful project in the bud than to let it grow into a tall tree when it takes a bulldozer to root it out. The longer you allow proliferation of this kind of expense the more money will be available to lobby for it, the more money will be available to influence legislators....

1374