

March 20, 1979

LB 508

made hauling coal to revitalize the branch lines. Very frankly I question that although I do not question their honesty but I have a little bit of experience with their past performance. Based upon that I am not going to hold my breath for the branch line to Bellwood to be rebuilt. I think that we have to recognize that during the last summer's peak movement of grain the railroads did spot a number of cars along these small branch line elevators but oftentimes those cars would sit there for a week before they were picked up. Then as Senator Kahle pointed out, upon occasion those cars are spotted and they are requested to be filled within a matter of ten hours. Now the elevator operators can only perform under certain conditions. They have the same problem that every other employer has and I think it is a matter of record that elevators have tried very diligently to cooperate with the railroads but I know that last summer and last fall... (mike not working properly)... movement of grain that many times those grain cars sat there loaded for a number of days and upon serious discussion with the railroads I was informed that although they had the boxcars, they did not have the engines necessary to move all those boxcars due to the high movement of coal. I really don't know why they don't bring back the turbine, the steam engine to move all those trainloads of coal and save some diesel fuel. Maybe that is going to be coming one of these days but I think that we certainly ought to take a look at some possibilities that are offered to us. We are going to produce. We all ready produce over seven billion bushels of corn in this nation last year. We are looking at another seven billion bushels of corn crop next year. That grain must be moved and most of it moves by rail. There is a very complicated integrated system of truck, rail and barge traffic in this nation and any time that any one of them breaks down the others do not function as well. Now if we do not do something to encourage additional improvement of the branch lines the State of Nebraska is going to find itself prevailed upon to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to upgrade roads to these small elevators. We know how much money it costs to build these roads today and to keep them in operating condition so one way or another we are going to spend some money and I think it is important that we take a look at it and I am reassured that my good friend, Senator Wesely, who hails originally from Butler County, Nebraska, has seen the light and is willing to reconsider his vote in committee, Senator Kremer, and hopefully LB 507 will come to the floor. With that kind of assurance or reassurance I am going to withdraw my motion or at least I will ask unanimous consent to withdraw my motion at this time and hope that we will see

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