

state park system as I have stated it many times on the floor of this Legislature, was that the Games and Parks Commission, won't you please finish one park at least? We've got a half a dozen unfinished parks in the state and almost all of them are almost in another state. We just flit around, go from one to the other. Well about two years ago Senator Mahoney started on a program to make some sense out of the state park system, and I certainly do congratulate them and hope that they will at least finish one park, and then we can say we have a state park. To the position at hand, one of the outstanding missing links in the Nebraska park system is that where the people are in the metropolitan area there is no investment in the state park system whatsoever. The closest would be Ponca which is a heavily overworked park, a little too small and a little too far from Omaha. It appears from what Senator Koch just said and what Senator Warner has said, that this really is a gift that we can put a park in the metropolitan area without condemnation, without a grandiose thing, we can work into it. I haven't followed this particular situation at all, but it appears, Senator Dworak, that this may be filling in a void in the park system that's badly needed, and I'll be looking a little further before I support your motion to strike it, but I thank you for bringing it to my attention, but at this time maybe we will be getting something in the metropolitan area that can work into a state park, so I'll just be watching. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Cope.

SENATOR COPE: Mr. President and members, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I supported this acquisition. In outstate Nebraska we have some of the finest parks in the whole country, but that in many cases does not help the eastern part, the heavily populated area, in the state, and I think that they need this. I think especially with the energy shortage that we have now and will continue to have, and the costs, I think people are just not going to travel even in Nebraska, that is, the people in Omaha cannot get out to Ft. Robinson. That's a long way. It's a beautiful park. It's great, and we have lots of them between Omaha and Ft. Robinson, but it's just impossible at the cost of fuel for people to do this. There is no question in my mind but what the eastern, the small metropolitan areas, or the large metropolitan areas in the small space are short of parks, short of places to spend weekends, and that, I believe, is how vacations are going to be taken. I think this is the answer. It is, and I repeat,