

May 21, 1979

LB 329

supported district elections. I do not believe that she supports them now and since this bill came out of committee relatively early in the session, it stayed on the consent file, and this is an exaggeration so that my credibility remains intact. It stayed on the consent calendar for a thousand years and all it would have taken to get it off there was a group of three Senators to object. After it was on the consent calendar on General File, I amended the original number from twelve to nine and the reason for that was based on the fact that nine districts totally within the city limits would give adequate representation. Originally I had twelve because these were to coincide with the legislative districts. Since some of those legislative districts extend outside the city limits, the number twelve was not necessary. It was perhaps, excessive, so I amended the number down to nine. Senator Pirsch, I don't remember for sure whether she voted for that or not. She perhaps did but nevertheless, nobody has made an attempt until the bill has gotten to Final Reading to tinker with it in this fashion. If I thought the amendment was valid, if I thought that it had merit, I would have so amended the bill myself in the beginning, but I am asking that in the last days of the session in this fashion, you will not vote to bring this bill back, that you will let it stay in the form it is now and pass it on Final Reading but to show why we do need district elections, a few days ago, it is kind of ironic, that in the twenty-fifth year of the Supreme Court's ruling, that segregation in the public schools was illegal and violated the constitution. Black police officers in Omaha had to file a suit in District Court because of discriminatory practices in the division relative to the schools they can be sent to, upgrading and promotions. A couple of years ago a fireman had to file a suit in District Court to obtain a promotion in the fire division which promotion was ordered by the federal courts. When we come to the streets and the shabby way that they are put together, various neighborhoods suffer more than others and were there representation on the council this would probably not occur to the extent that it does. You all know about the finances that are in disarray in Omaha where all areas of the city represented, perhaps some constructive programs could be together by the council that would meet the needs of all parts of the city and there would not be such a fragmentation within the city itself. They are talking about a Central Park Mall and under the plan that they have in Omaha that they would like to implement, they will take money which