

March 19, 1980

LB 1002

our nation for some time to come and maybe perpetually so.

SENATOR CLARK PRESIDING

SENATOR CLARK: The Chair would like to recognize former Senator Don Thompson under the South balcony. Will you step out Don so we can recognize you?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise in support of Senator Sieck and his amendment and the concept which he is trying to embody in LB 1002. I do not often split with my good friend Senator Murphy on the issues in this area. He and I have from time to time with some justification, I think, been critical of the way the funds have been expended by the Natural Resource Districts but I would have to say that I am most critical of the way some of those funds were spent for legal fees and engineering fees and I regret very much that much of the money that could have been spent for conservation had to go for this other kind of expenditure. So it's always been my sincere belief that if we were to publish the expenditures of these Natural Resource Districts in a paper of general circulation that perhaps the wiser expenditure of these funds would be the rule rather than the exception. I know that Senator Lewis speaks with deep feeling relative to his representation on the Natural Resources Commission and I think that he feels that the urban areas are definitely underrepresented. Senator Murphy points out that some of those funds were spent to build a structure so that Omaha citizens could bathe once a week. I'd suggest that, Senator Lewis, certainly the utilization of these funds in the development fund would encourage the construction of the kind of project that would facilitate the kind of activity that would enhance the utilization of the reservoirs by urban residents more often than once a week. The funds that are in the conservation fund are funds that will be spent on individual farmers' farms, my farm, Senator Sieck's farm, Senator Lamb's farm, individual farms. We would benefit personally from the expenditure of those funds. Oh, yes, there is some public benefit there also. In my personal opinion, I have serious doubts about the necessity of the separate funds. I think that doubt has been well expressed here oftentimes before. My principal reason for objecting to the establishment of the second fund which is the conservation fund is because we have never adequately funded the development fund. We have always given a lot of lip service but very little money to the development fund. Now there are those who will say that they expend the money foolishly. They may. We