

have here is this, that unless some system is found whereby we can operate agriculture at a profit it isn't going to be very long until there will be no middle class left in the entire United States. The backbone of this country has been the middle class. You have said many times on this floor that that is what we want to continue. If you read the newspaper yesterday you saw where a very small portion of the people control a major portion of the assets of the United States. The trend is that way. I think it is important that we recognize that we do something to reverse that trend. Today it may be Loran Schmit who is in difficulty. Tomorrow it may be someone else. The day after it will be someone else. The banking industry is in difficulty. Business is in difficulty, 1,835 people are going to be laid off at the Firestone plant in Iowa, I suppose those people today are now more aware of the difficulties that face the middle west than they were a week or so ago. So no one is immune. We are all in this together. I think we had better continue our efforts and try to bring some understanding to the federal government of the impact of the present policies upon the United States of America. As I have said earlier, I don't think that President Nixon deliberately intended to take a billion dollars out of the pockets of Nebraska cattle feeders back in 1973, but that is what he did. I don't think that President Carter really thought he was going to devastate American agriculture on January 4, 1980, but that is what he did. I don't think that President Reagan deliberately intends to wipe out American agriculture with his policies, but I believe that it is going to happen unless someone convinces him that there has to be a different program and a different set of policies. The so-called free market is no more free than this Legislature is unfettered, and we all know it. We talk about the deregulation of oil. Senator DeCamp and I discussed that last night very briefly.

SENATOR BEUTLER: One minute, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: When they deregulated the oil market, a few years ago, oil was \$2.00 a barrel. It shot up to \$40 a barrel. Now it's down to \$28 a barrel and the oil industry is pleading poverty. Well if we were getting 14 times, Senator DeCamp, of what we got when oil was selling for \$2.00 a barrel, I could get by with that. Johnny is a lot more eloquent than I am, has a lot higher IQ, he is more gifted with words. But I'll tell you one thing, Johnny, you