

January 16, 1986

PRESIDENT: Senator Johnson, you have approximately nine minutes. May we (gavel) have order in the Chamber, please. Senator Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President, members, I thank Senator DeCamp for, first of all, filing the motion and, second of all, providing me with part of his time. I don't know if I'll need all nine minutes, but I certainly will try and use them as effectively as possible. I think during the course, since Monday when we voted to adopt a new committee structure and to this particular point, a number of us have been discussing this committee change both in a positive sense and maybe some of the negative or drawbacks to the committee structure change. Needless to say, I will be the first to admit that I am concerned, from a parochial interest, as a chairman of a committee that will lose I think a significant portion of the committee, that being the environment portion of the Ag and Environment Committee. However, I look beyond that to other structures. I've had a number of senators who have come up to me, since we voted on the committee structure change, and indicate that they have some concerns as far as how committee assignments will be changed because certain members who have got a structure set up today, where they can serve on committees that they have a great deal of interest in, may be realigned in a way that they cannot serve on those committees in the future. I have talked with Senator Morehead at great length during the course of the last couple of days. It's been both lively and I think serious debate about the change and how it will impact Nebraska and the Unicameral. Clearly, this is an internal political thing inside the Legislature. It is something that I think deserves a second look. I think that Senator Morehead and those who pushed for the committee structure change recognized that, after the vote on that issue, that there was going to be, somewhere down the line, a motion filed to reconsider this whole reevaluation or change in the committee structure. I think, in my own particular case, that I can live under either system because I have tried to work in areas both in agriculture and my concern also with the environment. If that would be changed over to the Natural Resources Committee, which some have indicated that is where environment issues will end up, I suppose if I really wanted it bad enough I could put myself on that committee or try to be on that committee in the future. But the balance that we have currently in the Agriculture and Environment Committee, I think, is a good