

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I was not going to speak on this...on LR 16, but I felt impelled to because of what has happened in South Omaha and I have said this before when the bill was up...when the resolution was up a week ago. I have in front of me a World Herald article dated March 22, 1985. The headline says, "B.C. Beef Says Loss Of Armour Contract Forces Omaha Plant To Close." It goes on to say, "B.C. Dressed Beef", and I am a member of the board of directors, "the largest cattle slaughtering plant in Omaha, will close April 5th," the company President, William Chapman, said on Thursday. About 430 employees of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 22 were advised that they were going to lose their job. Chapman said Armour and others involved in beef slaughtering and processing are plagued because there are too many packers for the available number of cattle. Since then there are two other plants that closed and it is Dubuque Pack and Union Pack. Now, if any of you have gone by 33rd and L Street, which is in my district, where you saw blocks and blocks of stockyard pens, they have been all torn down. There is just very, very few left. It is one big mass of land that it will not be utilized for the stockyard pens. When I was growing up everyone of those pens were filled with cattle. At the Board of Directors meeting it was said over and over again that these plants are closing because of the fact there was not any cattle available. Some of the farmers that have called me at home, I have talked to them, asked them where they are shipping their cattle. They admitted they were shipping them to Kansas and Wyoming and other states but not anywhere in the State of Nebraska because of the price. I agreed with them, they should ship their cattle to wherever they got the best price. But you can see what is happening in the City of Omaha. We are trying desperately to get feedlots closer to Omaha. You read the article on Iowa Beefpackers the other day, said that they are having to ship cattle from 500 miles away to their plant. Now, that can't be done constantly, and B.C. Dressed Beef would have their employees come to work at seven o'clock in the morning. By ten o'clock they had to dismiss them because they didn't have any more cattle. They tell me because of the union contract they had to pay those employees for 36 hours of work regardless if they only worked 20. You can't keep