

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, and for Senator Marsh, there is nothing she can explain to me. She might can elaborate on something, but there is nothing which, if I don't understand it, she could possibly make clear to me. Now we're getting to the final days of the session, and the nerves are frayed and coming out. I haven't said anything on this atrocious bill. I've been in my office listening to all of the discussion. And it is going to be very interesting when some of these people who pride themselves on being concerned about the aged, those on fixed incomes, the ill for whom a telephone might be a lifeline start coming to them and saying I can't afford my telephone. I want to hear those people, and we're having record votes on all of these propositions, simply tell them that is the cost of competition, that is the cost of having a Legislature which is beholden to the large corporations. I had criticized the railroads in the old days as being the robber barons, mentioned how they purchased legislators. Well, it might have been a little overstating to say that these phone companies have bought senators. I'm not going to say that that would be unfair. But there certainly are senators who work for the phone companies. It's clear they are not going to vote in opposition to the phone company's interest because the hand that feeds is the hand that controls. If you watch the votes it is clear. I'll tell you why I'm speaking like this. I remember all of the things said above the ground and subrosa about Senator Schmit's involvement with video machines. The conflict of interest, it was always being bandied about. But since we've got some bigger bandits out there who don't care anything about the public and those who must have telephone service, and they have representatives in this body voting on these issues in behalf of their company to protect their jobs and their income, who says anything about it? Nobody, because it depends on the kind of mask you wear. You are either a freedom fighter or a terrorist. You are either a highwayman or the Lone Ranger. But to somebody who doesn't understand these niceties he sees two masked men, both armed, both willing to shoot people who disagree with him. So, nothing is going to be done to stop this juggernaut and I recognize it. But there is going to be a price to pay. The price won't be paid by the people in this Legislature because there are lobbyists and employers who will take care of them. But those other people who have no consistent representation in this Legislature, who cannot give the shrimp and champagne parties, who cannot threaten people or reward them with jobs, they are the ones who will suffer. On other matters as the session wears on we'll hear some of these people stand up here and talk about