

April 2, 1986

LB 1251

wish to speak, I recognize Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President and colleagues, for this opportunity you've given me. I am going to vote to keep these commissions because I have been glancing at the next bill, LB 1252, and the fiscal impact for 1986-87 is over \$12 million, in '87 to '88 it's over \$6 million. This is for bricks and mortar. This is capital construction. Some of it is worthy, it is for fire and safety protection for the people that will be using certain buildings. Some of it is for recreational purposes. Some of it is for educational buildings. But I think that history will judge this Legislature on where we put our priorities. If our priorities are to be compassionate and to aid human beings into having a better life, then I think history will have to say that the people of Nebraska are caring people. I know that we are spending millions of dollars for economic development. I know that we are spending millions of dollars on various programs that will in no way ever trickle down to touch or to help those people who cannot help themselves or who, with just a little bit of aid, will help themselves. I voted for the amendment to help the farmers in transition because they are people, they are not farmers. They are not from my district. I just think that when you vote you are going to have to think about that black man that sits in this Legislature and irritates so many of us Christians by pointing out that we practice one thing and we preach another. I think if we are going to go ahead with 1252 and spend these millions of dollars for bricks and mortar, and then we are going to vote to do away with these commissions that are attempting to help people that are attempting to do what we Christians profess is the right thing, to be compassionate, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to give shelter to the homeless, if we vote to do away with them, then the man you've been calling an atheist has proved his point, that we Christians are Christians only by name. And what it really comes down to is how much money we want to spend on erecting buildings that may last more years than the people that we are trying to help.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR HIGGINS: But those buildings will also be a reminder that we let so many people in our state go by the wayside and die because this is where our priority was. So I'm going to vote against this amendment because as a Christian I'm not going to let Ernie Chambers prove himself right and make the point that this Christian body doesn't really believe what they