

Chambers, sometimes the lobbyists do control the vote. You and I both know that. Sometimes they even control committee chairmanships, but as I say, my reason is mainly that I won't put another tax on anybody whether they smoke or they don't smoke because all I have heard, not just from my constituents but people out of my district, is can't you do anything to cut that budget? One man in my district made \$10 an hour. He took a \$2 an hour cut in pay. That is 20 percent and he laughed at me when I said I am trying to cut the budget 3 percent, and he said, huh, you are trying to cut the budget 3 percent and I just got mine cut 20 percent. He said it doesn't make a lot of sense that we can't squeeze out 3 percent out of all the agencies in the state when he gives up 20 percent. And that is why I am not going to put another tax on anything. I don't care even if it is diamond rings, which I think mink coats, diamond rings, and things like that, we could put a hefty tax on those things. They aren't a necessity. Cigarettes are not a necessity for me. For some people they are. So all I am saying is I am not running for office, I am not dancing with Walt Radcliffe. I am just doing what I promised my constituents I would do. I am not going to vote for any tax increase during the special session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. President, I mean.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you. Would you like to close, Senator Vard Johnson, please. Thank you.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I would like to deal with a few of the issues that have been raised during this morning's debate and the afternoon's debate on the increase in the cigarette tax. I guess the first issue is that of why only the smokers have to bear this budget problem. Well, the budget problem needs to be seen as a continuum, and not as a discreet matter. The budget problem that we face today is one that we were facing during the 1985 regular session and it is one that we could have addressed during the 1985 regular session in full had we voted with Senator Warner and myself and a few others to increase the income tax rate. That amendment, as you may recall, was offered. But during the 1985 regular session we balanced the budget as best we knew how on the backs of a lot of people. We balanced it on the backs of the consumers of wine, and the consumers of beer, and the consumers of distilled spirits because we increased those taxes, and we balanced the budget on the backs of the business folk who