

18 years and I've taken a lot of blame for things I've done right or wrong. But one of the things I've never been accused of is voting against agriculture. I've taken a lot of flak when I've stood up here from time to time almost alone. But I think that I can always say that I voted for agriculture and I voted for the farmers who live in those areas.

SENATOR CARSTEN: (Gavel.) Excuse me, Senator Schmit. The Chair would ask that the noise be kept at a little lower level. It is difficult for me to hear the speaker, and I'm sure it is many others. Please keep your voices down.

SENATOR SCHMIT: One of the first things I learned when I came here was that if you don't know something you sort of follow the advice and the counsel of those who come from that particular area of expertise. Education, you follow those people who came from education. In banking you follow those who had some banking expertise. In agriculture you follow those. There were some times I might not have known exactly why I was voting the way I did, but if I voted with Burbach, and Holmquist, and Kremer on agriculture, I could always defend my position. The same way is true with health and other issues. I'm going to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that if you vote with Senator Hoagland and my good friend Senator McFarland and Senator Wesely on this issue, you are voting wrong. You are doing exactly the opposite of why you are here. We can stand up here and we can talk, and we can plead, and we can preach. There is a tendency, from time to time, to slap old John down so he doesn't get his last hurrah and all that sort of thing. I don't think John looks at it like that. I don't look at it like that. I look at it as Senator Rod Johnson has said, you are dealing with the lives and the future of 60 or 70 thousand farmers and ranchers in this state. Now, they are not all going to be in jeopardy getting a loan. They are not all going to need a loan. But my son, or your sons and daughters are going to be making those applications. When you realize that you have hampered them, ladies and gentlemen, you are going to be back here and you are going to be answering those questions again. We have difficult enough times as it is today without putting a ball and chain around the leg of those individuals who are trying, and struggling, and fighting to make it work. If we were to do to Senator Wesely's employees, state employees who live in his district, what has happened to the Nebraska farmer in the last eight years, lower their wages by 70 percent, there would be a hue and cry from northeast Lincoln that would rival anything you've ever heard. There would be demands, and insistence, and