

compassion. His move to cut these crippled agencies even further shows not only a lack of compassion, but affirmative cruelty and total lack of concern and regard for people who need help the most. Now, government has the obligation not only to ensure people's rights, but to help those who need that help to assert their rights. This is done through legal aid, public defenders, the Ombudsman at the state level and there are a myriad examples that could be given. But what we are being asked to do here today is to take a group of people, and I'll use an illusion to the Native Americans and while everybody is riding with the tide and going with the flow in a yacht, they are put in a canoe and told to paddle upstream and Governor Kerrey says, I like what I see, I'm going to take their paddle from them. He takes the paddle and they are having such a hard time he says, well, give me your canoe while you're at it and then he has things the way he would like it. Senator DeCamp now comes along and says, after you've taken the paddle and the canoe, weight them down with chains and stones and tell them, swim or drown. It has been totally unfair what this society has done to these groups of people throughout the history of this country. We are taking feet that are already torn and bleeding and placing a pallet of thorns under them. We're taking heavy loads and placing them on the shoulders of those already burdened almost beyond endurance, and feeling that this is a conscionable action. I saw on television where representatives of some of these commissions came down, they begged, they cried, they spoke in halting voices with long pauses. Nobody should be reduced to crying and begging and the Legislature should not require that. The Legislature should not be proud when it requires people to come and show all of their agony, all of their scars to try to wring from the Legislature a mere pittance. It is totally unfair. The Legislature itself is being reduced by this nit-picking cruel act by the Governor, agreed to by the Budget Committee, to take from these the little that they had. Jonathan Swift said, a man might consent, although he doesn't like it, to being attacked by a lion, but no man wants to be eaten alive by a rat. That's what the Legislature is reducing itself to and I think it ought not to be done, but Senator DeCamp made a point. Why badger, why worry, why jerk around these helpless agencies that are there to try to extend at least a ray of hope to groups that have been dealt with contempt and the greatest amount of injustice that one people can visit on another? Peace, justice and equality do not come about by a Legislature controlled by the dominant society setting up barriers to those people who are most disadvantaged already. This is not nearly enough if we do away with the cut.