

February 28, 1983

SPEAKER NICHOL PRESIDING

SPEAKER NICHOL: We have with us this morning Dr. Robert Palmer, Minister of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, and as you know, he has had an experience recently and I have asked him just to take a few minutes to tell us about it briefly if he would prior to his prayer. Please rise.

DR. ROBERT PALMER: Last Friday afternoon we had the opportunity of taking off after a week in northern Minnesota in a single engine plane, four of us from Lincoln. At about 2000 feet and three minutes away from the Ely Airport, the engine for some reason or other blew up and oil was all over the manifold and the windshield, and we were over a national forest on the boundary waters and we happened to find a little lake called the Birch Lake, and after a quick prayer in which the pilot kept his eyes open and I closed mine, we ditched it into this lake. After skidding along for a hundred yards or more, we were able to walk away, all four of us. John DeCamp thinks any crash that you can walk away from is all right, maybe, but I had never been in one before, and I especially am grateful to God this morning for the privilege of standing with you Senators and friends thanking God for the gift of life. Some of you doubted whether I could walk on water or not. I finally learned how but it is a very seasonal type of miracle. And some of you doubted whether a Presbyterian's prayers are heard. Mine were heard at least in that steep descent of a dive last Friday. So when it came time for my sermon yesterday morning, and I know some of you were in church, I literally threw the sermon away and made some notes on the back of the manuscript of my other sermon. I call it the "Flipside Sermon", and the beauty of life and the way God intervenes in our life is that sometimes the "flipside" is better than the topside. There is always bad news but there is always good news too. So I hope that in the days and weeks which lie ahead of us as leaders in this state, no matter how dark the day may seem and no matter how bad the music may sound, remember there is a "flipside", too, and the opposite of the bad news is the good news. So I just thought of a few words that came to my mind and talked about those yesterday and you need not worry, I am not going to lay that sermon on you this morning. I am just going to take one of those words and say the word is "priority". We talk a good deal about priorities when we develop our budget. We talk about priorities in terms of our time. Let me tell you this, when you are going head down at a hundred miles an hour to a frozen lake, your priorities have a way of sorting out very quickly. And in retrospect I hope that we may have our priorities very, very straight in terms of our thinking and our planning and our programming and our