

March 20, 1973

oftentimes members of the body and members of the public, state that the Legislature clutters the law books with issues that are unnecessary, or in some form duplicative. I can, to a degree, to a small degree, agree with the earlier statements that there is already the ability to do what L.B. 25 intends to do, that we do have a system of probation which would allow this to be done but I have to think that I read the mood of the State and for the most part, the mood of the nation. People have had it with courts allowing leniency. It's awfully hard for me to look around and see some of the things that come out of the courts. I think that the people of the State of Nebraska and of this country continue to wonder, are we going to chart a course that allows to, what I believe and I think many of us believe, to be a state of over-permissiveness. Are we going to return to a system upon self-reliance. I wonder how many times, under the guise of doing right, more wrong or more harm has been done by permissiveness. Somewhere, sometime, you have to say you're on the wrong track. This past weekend Senator Goodrich and I had occasion, having our offices broken in earlier, had a parent of one of the boys calling, asking us to speak to them and to press upon them that at the early age of 12 or 13 they had made a grave mistake, one that could be punishable, that more could be done through a good talking to and this was done. But I'm also thinking into my own early teen years. Thank God I was never involved in any trouble but I had many friends that I can recall that were and I have wondered, if they weren't done more harm by a strict policy of leniency than if they had been made to understand that when you do something that is against society that you have to have that blatantly put back in front of you. I wonder how many times the so-called hardened criminal that we attach the label to an adult, would not have been that hardened criminal if he had been made to stand up and face reality at an earlier age rather than patted on the back and say that it was beyond his control, you've had a hard life, etc. I've had a little concern about the portion of this bill which says; the court may sentence such person to work on public streets, parks or other public property for a period not exceeding 10 working days. I can again see where some people would take this to be a case of making a public showcase of an individual producing some psychological harm. I don't like to see that and I guess in the end I have to say that I don't think it does that. I think that it has certainly a capability of doing that but I think in most cases it probably does not, and in essence, I am saying, is it not better, is it not better to stop a problem person at an early age than it is to continue to say there is no such thing as a bad boy, etc. I just have to think that we have, like I say, I probably shouldn't impress upon you the fact that, it's a matter of philosophy, we're talking about this or capital punishment

(End of Belt #11)