

March 11, 1981

LB 205

training that a police officer has plus the fire training that needs to be done and so we have all these protections built into the bill.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute.

SENATOR NEWELL: We are not giving every fireman in the city the authority. We are giving those who deal with arson, a very serious and severe crime, especially in the major metropolitan areas. This is not unprecedented. It is done in many, many major metropolitan cities. It is the same authority that the Fire Marshal has today. It is a well thought out, well researched bill. I have spent two years trying to deal with this problem making sure that we have, in fact, not only a tight procedure but that we are only authorizing those who need these powers to deal with arson. The bill has been endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce, the insurance industry, firefighters, the City of Omaha. The panel from the Chamber of Commerce that went through and studied the city's operation and so forth recommended this. This is not a desire to just blanket give authority to a bunch of firefighters. It is a good bill. It deserves to be readvanced and all of the fears that have been thrown up here are basically just plain unjustified.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Chambers, and then Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, Senator Newell made some very interesting comments, and I think if he makes a statement on this floor, he should be prepared to back it up just like I am prepared to back up what I say. So I would like to ask him some questions about his bill. He said that I made the remark that I am holier than thou and that is why you ought to take my position, that I say I know things that the rest of you may not know. Let us see whether that is true or not. Senator Newell, will you answer some questions about your bill?

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Newell, do you yield?

SENATOR NEWELL: Yes, sir.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: In the amendment that you offered or Senator Beutler offered with the corrections you made, what is an organized fire department?

SENATOR NEWELL: An organized fire department is one in which, in terms of the entire bill, is one in which it is paid officers who are...and organized in a municipality. So it is paid officers, basically full time employees, with the clarifi-