

about. It is not a pleasant activity, but, frankly, I don't see any alternative. And, Senator Chambers, I hear you when you talk about sentencing patterns that are racist, 'cause that's what you're really getting at. In fact, your remarks brought me back to a time when I worked on a study some years ago with the corrections system back in '74 and you didn't have to be a Rhodes' scholar to figure out that the people who were most likely to end up in prison were poor, more than likely not white, and, frankly, didn't have any support at home. That's a very serious problem and I think we ought to address it. However, this isn't just Nebraska in..that the trends we're seeing here. There is an article, for instance, in the February '89 issue of our little State Legislatures magazine that talks about the nationwide problem that we have with the need to build more prisons. It isn't just Nebraska, it's everywhere. I talked to a legislator last summer from Georgia. Georgia was thinking seriously probably about even going into special session to deal with that, and I think we all know that part of the root of this is the current public demand for a get tough on crime attitude and legislators create that problem at the request of the public by increasing what we define as a crime and then, in some cases, mandating sentences, and it's just...it is a natural progression and that progression has started and there isn't any way to turn that back at this point other than some of the long-term things that we're going to try to do. I would also call your attention to a report that Senator Chizek requested from our own Research Division which took another look at these numbers and, once again, and these are essentially the same numbers that Senator Warner is citing, but some of the conclusions here are, and let me just cite from this report: Unless the Legislature reacts to the problem of prison overcrowding, there can be no doubt that the capacity of the state prison system will reach the point where it will operate in an unsafe manner. The state's designed capacity for adult male offenders totals 15...1,535. Based on figures supplied by the Department of Corrections, the state is expected to achieve 150 percent of adult male capacity in 1991. This report is brief, but it goes on and looks at the possibilities that we could do by using diversion and could we offset some of this and, frankly, the offsetting effect of this just isn't enough to solve that problem and it puts us in a position of potentially being faced with a federal court order which, if that happens, if our experience mirrors that of other states, which I don't think there's any reason to believe that it wouldn't, then you probably end up building even more facilities