

attended a seminar in juvenile justice in Fort Lauderdale and at that seminar the main thrust, at least, that I got from that was that there are significant changes going on in the area of juvenile justice. In fact, the trend seems to be in many states closing some of these youth development centers or at least shrinking them in size to the worst offender situations, and then community based programs for those who are not in that circumstance. And it was a very enlightening seminar and I believe that we have appropriated some money this year to \$50,000 to look at the whole question of juvenile justice. And I am convinced and I agree, I think maybe Senator Scofield will talk about this, on this issue I am convinced that that is a trend for the future. However, I also believe that there is a place for the Kearney Youth Development Center even if we make some of these changes in our juvenile justice system, that apparently are... seem to be the trend in this area. Statistically, the facts as related in the World-Herald are evident and are pretty obvious that the youth development center is understaffed and there are insufficient number of beds. For the record, for the period from July of 1983 to June of 1984 the total residents for that 12-month period was 283 with the average population of 148, the average length of stay, seven months, eighteen days. From July of '87 to June of '88 the total residents increased to 379, average population 154, average length of stay five months. And now the current statistics for 10 months indicate July '88 to April '89 total residents 253, average population 169, average length of stay essentially the same, at five months. And those statistics, what do those statistics indicate? What they indicate, obviously, number one, is that the average number of residents is larger by 19 than the actual number of beds at the facility. It also indicates that because of the need for space at the Kearney Youth Development Center, the length of stay of each resident has decreased from seven months to five months. In discussing this issue with Colleen Buckley and others, it is clear that we do send the worst offenders to Kearney and that there is a rehabilitation program that is available at Kearney and that if we start decreasing the length of stay of these residents artificially because of the lack of staff and the lack of beds, that we really are not getting our money's worth for even the 150-bed location, that it seems logical that we not overcrowd this facility because this is the facility that is under the greatest amount of pressure now due to the drug problem in Omaha and that pressure has continued to increase. Senator Scofield was correct, I think, in her support, not only