

ways to determine whether conduct is wrong, then we might have a better way of coming to grips with what we are dealing with here. If you take for example an assault statute, if I am going to punch somebody, it doesn't matter whether the person is 20-years old, 30-years old, 40-years old, or whatever, the assault, the quality of it is determined by how much damage that I do, and not the age of the individual. When we talk about theft statutes and whether the crime is going to be a misdemeanor or a felony or which grade of misdemeanor or felony, value of the item taken is how we make that determination. So what we ought to do when we set up classifications of punishments, we should be sure that those types of offenses can be classified in a rational manner, too. So anything that can have a value placed on it in terms of dollars should be classified based on the value it would have in dollars, and not the nature of the property. A diamond, if it genuinely is worth \$1,000, and we forget the tremendous markups and everything else, say that the absolute minimum value of this diamond, and you can't set that because I know it is fluid, but if there could be such a thing, if that value is \$1,000 and the absolute minimum value of a car that is stolen is \$1,000, and the cow is \$1,000, the crime consists in taking that property which belongs to another person against that person's will with the intent of converting it to your own use, and you don't compensate the individual. So it doesn't matter whether it is a diamond, a car or a cow, the crime is the same because of the value of the item. I know Nebraska is called an agricultural state, but it is becoming increasingly a service, a state where services predominate in providing employment for people and income. So as you begin to use more things in the area of telemarketing and computers, will you begin to say that because this particular telemarketing industry brings a lot of money into the state, if you commit a crime against them, it is going to be considered far more serious than if you commit it against this telemarketer who does not bring as much value to the state. When that kind of thing is done, the lawmaking process and the laws are placed at the disposal of economic and political interest. That should not be the case. There cannot be the concept of blind justice in the sense of not taking note of who stands before the bar of justice, but rather the alleged offense. That cannot be when before you even bring somebody into court, you have taken into consideration whose ox, so to speak, is being stolen, not gored, Mr. Speaker. I know what you were thinking, but at least you were thinking and I read your mind on that one. By the way, Senator Baack, our Speaker, is so straightforward and honest, he