

way of dealing with this problem some of the members of the school board think is by just saying everybody has got to receive the same sentence under all circumstances. Now I think a better policy is to allow discretion, allow discretion by the assistant principals and principals so that in Senator Johnson's case if someone in fact is caught by what is a cheese knife not intended for cutting anything but cheese why he doesn't receive the mandatory semester expulsion that the school board thought it was levying against people that were caught with real knives. I think that illustrates the problems with mandatory sentences, the problems with removing discretion from people in the school who are able to see what, in fact, is going on and like we did last year in the drunk driving issue we should reserve mandatory sentences for only the most extreme circumstances and then with the intent to remove them after a few years, after the deterrent effect has gone away which we expect will happen in the drunk driving area. Now I think by far the better policy if the members of the school board are concerned about blacks getting harsher sentences than whites or students generally not getting harsh enough sentences is for them to follow the actions of the principals and the assistant principals more closely and to discipline them and to let them know that their penalties are being closely scrutinized and closely examined, not to take the mandatory sentence meat axe approach which this amendment represents. So I would support this amendment and suggest that we remove it from this bill so that any penalties meted out in Omaha and elsewhere can be done in a much more sophisticated individualized case by case basis. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: We have four speakers requesting recognition and the Chair recognizes next Senator Goodrich.

SENATOR GOODRICH: Mr. President, members of the body, I would like to call your attention to something here. It is an old lawyer's trick. When you are doing something with your right hand, create a diversion with your left hand so that nobody pays any attention to what you are doing. Senator Hoagland has just done this trick. It is done many times on this floor. In other words he brings up he wants to protect the black student because the black student gets more severe penalty than the white student. Hogwash! It has nothing to do with this bill. It is not in there. It has nothing to do with it. When it comes right down to it, we are dealing with one subject and that is sending a message to the students of any school district, regardless of whether it is Omaha or any other, that if you bring a loaded gun into school, we are