

April 19, 1979

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I don't think we're being honest. We talk about someone gambling today. John says it's wrong. It's absolutely wrong to put that man away for five years. Okay, I agree. I think it's wrong too. You can go down to Aksarben right now or at least Grand Island, go down and bet \$50,000 on a race, bet a \$100,000 on a race. Perfectly legitimate. Right now, ladies and gentlemen, if someone is caught bookmaking in the City of Omaha, with the enactment of the criminal code, I believe present law says that they can go to jail for somewhat 20 years and be fined up to \$10,000. The travesty about the law is right now there's a place in Omaha, Senator...Senator Lamb, that you can go to and make a bet of as much as you want and it is perfectly legitimate. How can we have that kind of a law? On one hand we're putting someone in jail for 20 years for making a \$10 or a \$1,000 bet, but around the corner you can go and make a bet in downtown Omaha for the same amount of money and it's perfectly legitimate. Ironic, indeed. Last Saturday...last Saturday if you were in downtown Omaha, you couldn't get into that gambling establishment. You couldn't get in. Someone had indicated that they had taken in as much as a half a million dollars that morning in the City of Omaha alone. I'm convinced, ladies and gentlemen, I'm very much convinced, and I think you should be too that no matter what we have in the law, no matter what we put in the law, people will continue to gamble, whether it's on horse racing, whether it's on basketball, whether it's on baseball, and of course Senator John DeCamp's favorite pastime, football, and I don't mean that as an active participant, I'm talking about it from another standpoint, because Senator John had indicated to me that he, himself, is involved. Now I was in Senator Chambers place of business not too long ago, within the last couple of years. I know that he didn't know that I noticed that he had a couple of betting sheets, football sheets, in his...now I'm not saying that Senator Chambers bets, but he had the same kind of gambling paraphernalia on his table that most bookmakers have in their...now I'm not saying that Senator Chambers runs a booking establishment in his barbershop, but most barbershops have this kind of thing going on. You know it and I know it. I don't know whether Ernie gives more than just haircuts, Senator Simon, but the fact of the matter is it's going on right now in this state. What are we going to do about it? Well, I personally would like to see the penalty for gambling somewhat lessened. Senator John says, and I think John is absolutely wrong...Senator John has told us here this morning that if we leave the felony provision as it is intact, you're going to find the mafia, whoever organized the crime is, coming into the

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