

April 25, 1979

LB 221

PRESIDENT: Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, I had planned to offer this amendment and a number of others and I would just like to go through and explain a number of other amendments that I had originally planned to offer and then tell you why I am not going to offer those other amendments but only this amendment. I intended to offer an amendment like this but also one that would exclude those combat veterans, those people who could claim that they had served in a military theater. I also was going to offer an amendment that said that the marital age, that people could not be married in the state of Nebraska until they became twenty-one years of age. I think it is obvious, the point, the direction that I was going to go with these sort of amendments. I was going to offer an amendment that no contract could be signed, no legitimate contract could be signed by anybody under the age of twenty-one. You know what that would do with the retailers. They would be all excited about that, new car dealers and so forth. I was going to offer an amendment that would basically say that no Nebraskan could be drafted into the armed services of the United States if the draft is reimposed until he was twenty-one years of age. Now that is a little unconstitutional but it is a heck of a good amendment. You know, and the points can go and go and go and go. I offer this amendment. It is not a spurious amendment. I think it is one of the most serious of all of them. This amendment says that if you were in the military services and you come home on leave you could drink in a Nebraska bar if you were under twenty-one. Now many of you know that if you are in the military service you can drink now at the age of eighteen on base. Many of you know that there is the question of when, you know the major question here is when do people become adults. I think that we have to make a decision or if there is a great desire to make a decision, that twenty-one year olds or when you become an adult, then we ought to at least allow this one exemption for military veterans. You know I am a veteran. I served in Vietnam and I was under twenty one and this great state had the foresight at the time to have lowered their drinking age at that same time I was in Vietnam from twenty-one to twenty. That was in 1969 and I appreciated that because then I could have, if I could have got back to the United States which I desperately wanted to do, I could have at least went down to the local bar and had a drink. Later on