

millions of dollars and the more facilities they built, the more they filled. Offenses that formerly had not carried jail sentences carried jail sentences. Legislators became very anxious to outdo each other in creating new offenses in extending the amount of time served by an individual, making mandatory sentences and this is the type of attitude which has really overburdened the criminal justice system so that it cannot fulfill its function at the federal level, to a lesser degree at the state level. There are individuals including judges who are saying that this idea of locking up people and throwing away the key, constantly putting people in jail has to be rethought. That does not work, it has never worked, it cannot work. Somebody once defined to me the meaning of the term insanity. It means to do the same thing the same way over and over and expect a different result. This method or idea of locking people up as an exclusive way to deal with the problem of crime has never worked. The notion that society is being overrun by criminals is not new. There is an epigrammatist named Marshall, a Roman, who wrote epigrams and he wrote one that described the attitudes of the Romans. They said there is so much crime abroad in the land that the criminals ought to be in the city and they ought to build a small enclosure to house the people who are not criminals. So that idea has always been here. The notion of overly punishing people has always been with us from the Old Testament, they want to kill people for picking up sticks on the Sabbath, kill a child for cursing his parents. Senator Witek, I don't approve of children cursing their parents, but I think that's kind of an overreaction. So those ideas are not new. What we would like to do, at least what I would like to do, what I would like to see us undertake is a new departure where we don't just look at a symptom and if we see a mosquito and we happen to have a sledge hammer in our hand, a sledge hammer will kill a mosquito, therefore we use it. If we can use an implement, if we can use a system or a methodology which is far less severe and drastic, that is what we ought to do. I'm hoping that the consideration of LB 627 will give us that opportunity. Some people I found out were waiting for me to respond to a letter that the Attorney General wrote to me in which he certified...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...that I am a liar. Well, I'm not going to gloat today. I don't hold anybody, as I've told some of my colleagues on the floor, I don't hold anybody responsible for