

Daily Nebraskan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Tap those phones

New law will chill investigations

A bill recently passed by the Nebraska Legislature will have a "chilling effect" on police investigations into gambling.

The Legislature struck gambling from a list of suspected crimes for which permission to use telephone wiretaps can be obtained from state court judges, an Omaha World-Herald article reported.

The change was a major blow to police departments in the state. The wiretaps have worked as a major tool in law enforcement during the last several years. Evidence police obtain from secretly listening to phone conversations can be used as evidence in criminal prosecutions.

Opponents of wiretaps argue that the suspect's privacy is invaded when someone listens in on the line. But police need the freedom to tap personal phone lines. It's just like searching a house.

It's not an invasion of privacy, but rather a necessary evil. As long as the departments use the wiretaps with good sense — and there is no evidence that they haven't — then people shouldn't have anything to hide. Why protect suspected criminals any more than you have to?

Fortunately, police can still get federal court approval for wiretaps. Most of the recent gambling cases have used permission from state judges, the World-Herald reported. Federal

approval often takes longer than on the state-level, thus hindering the investigation.

Losing wiretaps also could cost police departments more money. Omaha Police Chief Robert Wadman said he might have to hire more officers to handle gambling investigations.

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The Daily Nebraskan would like to add a comment on something else, which has absolutely nothing to do with wiretaps. The DN usually scrambles for letters at the end of the school year. Students spend the last few weeks of school typing term papers instead of letters, leaving the DN without any extra opinion from the "outside."

That's not the case this year.

Oh yeah, few students have written in lately, but three members of the Legislature have helped pick up the normal slack. During the last week, the DN has run letters from Sens. Jerry Miller, M.L. Dierks and Roger Wehrbein complaining about the "offensive" nature of our April 1 joke issue, The Daily Half-asskin. Keep the letters coming guys. We enjoy hearing your comments.

We also want to hear from the students . . . pro or con. So far we've only received one letter from a UNL student about it, and joke issue editor Spuck Obscene can't wait to read more. Don't let him down.

Letter

Senator dislikes joke issue's drugs spoof

Your reference to drugs through pictures and words in the Daily Half-asskin parody issue (Daily Nebraskan, April 1) was not a good spoof. Casual reading, or reading by those younger, who cannot process what you read and what the staff wanted to accomplish, could be misinterpreted. This tells me you have much to process yourselves before you mature into

journalists.

There is much humor in your environment that can be focused on that does not rally around drugs, vulgar language or direct insults. My hope is that you have learned from this poor effort.

Jerry D. Miller
state senator

Reader calls DN columnist a 'hypocrite'

Where does Daily Nebraskan columnist Curt Snodgrass stand? It seems to me he's a hypocrite. In his column (DN, April 13), he states that "People should be free to decide for themselves what to do with their money" and "they attempt to make their morals legally binding upon the rest of us." He was referring to the "Bible-bangers" who want to impose their ideas upon us. I think he is opposed to other people forcing their ideas upon us.

says that government should tell us to wear a helmet.

It is hypocritical to say that we should be able to spend our money freely, but that we can't make up our own minds freely, money or otherwise. I don't see how he can say that he doesn't want "Bible-bangers" to tell us we can't spend our money freely, but it's OK for the government to impose this law and not give us the freedom of choice.

Brian Shaffer
speech communication



FIRST THEY ASKED HOW COULD THOSE IOWANS HAVE SO MUCH WEIGHT PICKING THE FRONT RUNNERS



NOW LOOK WHOSE TURN IT IS . . .



Well-to-do get hit hard by taxes

Royko's liberal pal complains, must pay same as Republicans

It was clear that my liberal friend Moonbeam was upset about something the other day. His hand shook so badly that he almost spilled his Chablis on his power-rod tie.

I took the next stool and asked the nature of his problem. Social injustice? The plight of the underclass? The overcrowding of the prison population? The miseries of the Third World?

"No, it's a personal disaster," he said. "I have just left my accountant's office and now must write the check."

You mean THE biggie? Your taxes?

"Yes, and I have never been so badly gored. I can't believe it."

Oh, well, you're in the upper income brackets. You can afford it.

"But it's unfair. I mean, there should be a limit on how much they can grab. This is . . . this is . . ."

Economic violence?

"Yes, that's a perfect phrase for it. The government has committed economic violence against me. Where have I heard that phrase before?"

Jesse Jackson uses it to describe what is being done to the poor by the rich.

"Oh, Well, don't get me wrong. I'm sympathetic to the poor. I always have been. You know that."

Yes, Moonbeam, I've heard you agonize in their behalf at many a cheese-and-wine party.

"Right. But I think there are limits to even my compassion. Why, I just read an article that said about 5 percent of us, who are in the upper brackets, have been paying the lion's share of the income taxes. But about half the country is in the lower brackets and is paying only 6 or 7 percent of the taxes."

I read that, too. Seems fair to me. "Fair? Why is it fair for me to spend the first four months of the year

working for the government? Do you realize that's what they took this time — more than a third of all my income? What happened to all that tax reform?"

As it turns out, that was the reform. You got it, they take it.

"But I was in favor of it. I'm always for any kind of reform. But now I'm paying a lot more. What kind of reform is that?"

It's the kind of reform that Sen. Bradley the Tall believes in. Remember, tax reform was his project. As I recall, he is one of your heroes.

"Definitely. A great liberal. But why would he do something like this to me?"

Because you are a fat cat.

"How dare you. I have never been a fat cat. Fat cats are, by definition, wealthy and greedy Republicans. I am a liberal Democrat."

But you are well-off.

Yes, but why should I be punished for the greed of wealthy Republicans?"

I think I understand. You thought that only the wealthy Republicans would be clobbered? But somehow wealthy liberals wouldn't?

"Yes, that was the impression I had."

But, Moonbeam, it can't be done that way. If they're going to soak the well-off, then it has to be done to everyone with a big bankroll.

"It doesn't seem fair. It's like

punishing the innocent along with the guilty. Couldn't they have established a credit or deduction of some kind for compassion and decent thoughts?"

I don't think that would be legal.

"It should be. And what was all that news talk about how Reagan was going to take from the poor and give to his rich supporters?"

Just talk. It really can't be done since the poor don't have enough to spare anyway. So when the government needs money, it has to take it from those who have it. Remember what Willie Sutton said when they asked him why he robbed banks?

"What did he say?"

He said: "Because that's where the money is." And that's the way taxes work.

"So this means that all this time I've been hating Reagan for the wrong reason."

I don't know. Why were you hating him?"

"Because he was being cruel and insensitive to the poor. Committing economic violence against them."

In terms of tax rates, no, he and Congress really haven't done that. So now you don't have to hate him anymore.

"Of course I still hate him."

But why?

"Because he's being cruel and insensitive to me."

But this is what you wanted. Higher taxes for the well-to-do has been part of your liberal agenda. How can you be angry about achieving your very own agenda?

"I don't know. It's confusing. Sometimes I wish I were poor so I would not have this inner conflict."

Just give them time, Moonbeam, give them time.

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Royko is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist with The Chicago Tribune.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not run, is left

to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letter

should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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tor and Joel Carlson, columnist. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.