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February 9, 1995

Bill hopes to hit habitual criminals hard

By J. Christopher Hain
Senior Reporter

Gov. Ben Nelson wants to make life difficult for habitual criminals in Nebraska.

Nelson appeared before the Legislature's Judiciary Committee Wednesday to testify in support of LB371, a crime bill introduced by Sen. John Lindsay of Omaha on behalf of the governor.

LB371 makes up a major portion of several criminal justice initiatives being proposed by the governor.

A large part of the bill increases

penalties for several types of crimes and includes a "three strikes and you're in" proposal.

"This bill will increase the cost of committing crimes in Nebraska," Nelson told the committee.

"Three strikes and you're in," as the governor has called it, imposes a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years on certain repeat violent crimi-

nals and 10 years on nonviolent repeat offenders.

The bill increases penalties for: dealing in illegal drugs, possession of a firearm by a felon or fugitive from justice, use of a firearm to commit a felony, drug-related crimes near schools and use of a motor vehicle to assault an officer.

LB371 increases funding for several law enforcement agencies and creates a boot camp for nonviolent, younger adult offenders. The boot camp would try to increase a convicted criminal's chance of becoming a productive member of society

through education and rehabilitation.

Harold Clarke, director of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, said the boot camp would be a six-month, structured program that would provide punishment without expanding the load on the state's correctional facilities.

LB371 also deals with juveniles convicted of crimes punishable by life and makes changes in "good time" reductions for inmates.

Attorney General Don Stenberg, a frequent critic of Nelson, supported LB371. However, Stenberg suggested several amendments to the bill.

"Three strikes and you're in."

BEN NELSON
Governor

Stenberg's amendments dealt with capital punishment, violent juvenile criminals, habitual criminals, parolees and auto theft.

Policy targets gun storage on campus

By Matthew Waite
Senior Reporter

If a proposed policy change is approved by student government and the regents, UNL will be like an old west saloon — check your guns at the door.

The change in the student code of conduct would add to the regulations on living units with an expanded section about weapons on campus.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, said the change formed by a committee reviewing the student code would require that students living on campus turn over their guns to University Police to be stored at the station.

The student code of conduct forbids guns from buildings at the university, except for on-campus living units. The policy allows guns to be stored by residence assistants in the residence halls and the house presidents in the greek houses.

Police Chief Ken Cauble told the committee that individual gun covers, racks and a place to clean the guns would be provided.

Griesen said the way the guns were handled in the past was difficult. He said students who liked to hunt but lived far away from Lincoln had problems trying to check out their guns early in the morning, when many left for trips.

Now, with the police holding the guns, they will be accessible 24 hours a day, Griesen said.

But even that may not persuade some gun owners to turn in their guns.

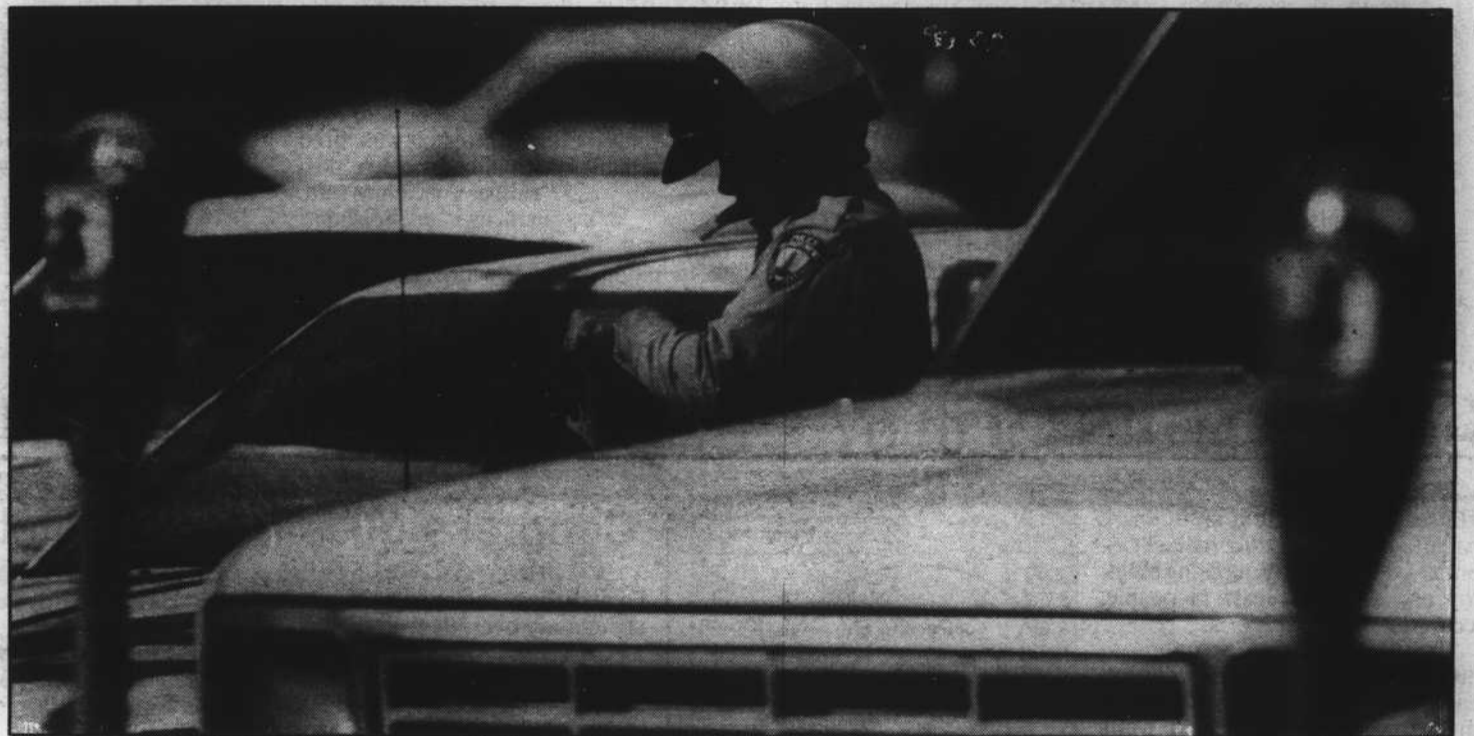
Andrew Loudon, the president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, said that realistically, not every gun owner on campus would turn in their gun.

"I don't expect the majority of hunters to give up their guns to police," he said. "If you ask me 'do you think this is enforceable'... I would say no.

"I'm not pessimistic, I'm realistic on how this policy will work."

Cauble said that the policy change would add to the duties of the University Police, but that he did not mind.

"It's something we're willing to take on to make it safer for students," he said.



Jon Waller/DN

Lincoln Public Safety Officer Milleson tickets cars across from the Nebraska Union Wednesday afternoon. Milleson was checking for cars that were illegally extending time.

Parking fines mean money for schools

By Matthew Waite
Senior Reporter

When Mike Emanuel got into his shiny red Chevy Beretta Tuesday afternoon, he didn't see the little gift the city left for him under his windshield wiper.

Expletives flew when he did. The sophomore agri-business major claimed he was in the space, which didn't have a meter, for only 10 minutes. He also said the person who parked in the space before him had left without a ticket.

Emanuel left with a \$5 parking violation, and he wasn't the only one. More than 10 cars along R Street in front of Nebraska Union had parking tickets on them.

According to Lincoln Violations Bureau records, the city took in \$498,889 from January 1994 to December 1994. State law requires that all money not set aside to run the ticket program go to public schools in the city. Lincoln sent \$352,166 to the city schools and \$146,723 to run the parking ticket program.

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Jon Waller/DN

Milleson and Jim Salber of the Nebraska State Historical Library and Museum talk after Salber received a ticket.

Nelson supports government appointment of NU regents

By Wendy Thomas
Staff Reporter

A plan to appoint members to the NU Board of Regents could cause the University of Nebraska to drift into the hands of the government, NU Regent Chuck Hassebrook said Wednesday.

Gov. Ben Nelson introduced a constitutional resolution Tuesday that would make the

regents appointed, rather than elected, officials.

Hassebrook of Walthill, said the change would signal the loss of NU's independence, and the new system would be not be representative of Nebraska citizens, but of the Legislature and governor.

The justifications for such a move, Hassebrook said, are weak.

"To argue that somehow we're going to

have higher quality regents if we go to appointment," he said, "ignores the practical experience of what we see happening in other states."

In states where regents are appointed, Hassebrook said, some are judged by the amount of money they give to a gubernatorial campaign. When that happens, the race becomes more about wealth than about quality.

Hassebrook said other reasons given for removing regent elections, were equally as

flimsy. He said one of those reasons, that people don't know who their regent is, was especially poor.

"There's a lot of people out there who don't know who their congressman is," he said. "Are we going to do away with Congress?"

But if the resolution passes the Legislature, Regent John Payne of Kearney said it probably

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