



AUSTRALIAN COALITION AGAINST DEATH PENALTY

also known as - ACADP

ACADP is an Australian registered non-profit human rights organization with no political or religious affiliation.

ACADP is an Australian independent semi-private organization dedicated to achieving total abolition of the death penalty, worldwide.

ACADP was founded in Melbourne Australia in June 2000. The organization acts in accordance with The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in that ...

‘Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.’ (Article 3)

ACADP also supports The United Nations Commission on Human Rights against the incarceration of offenders for purposes of punishment in that ...

‘No one shall be subjected to torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment (also known as Death Row Phenomenon Syndrome) – that incarceration of dangerous offenders to be subject solely for the purpose of security to others.’ (Article 5)

Each and every day around the world, Governments legally kill men, women and children via various methods – hanging, lethal injection, electrocution, gassing, beheading or stoning to death. Capital punishment is a barbaric, brutal, cruel, degrading, inhuman and uncivilized punishment. The death penalty is a part of politically motivated corrupt criminal justice system, where it is used against certain people that Governments ‘select’ to eliminate for a variety of reasons.

The death penalty is a direct violation of the most fundamental universal human right – the right to life. Governments do not give nor grant us human life and they should have no right to take away a human life. Human rights are universal. Human rights belong to all everyone. Human rights are everybody’s business. As members of the human race, each and every one of us has a born right to protect human life, regardless of location on this Earth. The death penalty cannot be separated from universal Human rights.

ACADP opposes the use of the death penalty in all cases, under any circumstances – unconditionally !!!



ACADP cites several reasons for this view ...

- Because the death penalty is a violation of the most fundamental universal human right – the right to life.
- Because the death penalty is a barbaric, brutal, cruel, degrading, inhumane and uncivilized form of punishment – incarceration of offenders protects the innocents from the dangerous.
- Because the death penalty is fallible – the possibility of error of judgement can never be excluded – innocent/wrongly convicted people have been executed in the past.
- Because the death penalty is extremely corruptible – some death row prisoners are 'chosen/selected' to be executed, while others are not.
- Because the death penalty is overwhelmingly biased and discriminative against the disadvantaged, the poor, the uneducated, the mentally ill, the mentally retarded, child offenders, political opponents, racial, ethnic and religious minorities, individuals deemed by governments to be 'troublesome' and offenders who commit non-violent crimes.
- Because the death penalty has a brutalizing effect on the community, actually inspiring more acts of violence and copycat crimes - thereby diminishing rather than increasing the deterrent effect.
- Because the use of the death penalty creates more victims in society – the innocent family members and loved ones of the executed offenders.

ACADP receives no money from government, corporations nor the public. The organization is entirely staffed by dedicated human rights activist volunteers.

ACADP promotes the development of human rights values with the aim for total abolition of the death penalty ... for a death-penalty-free world.

ACADP aims at educating society (with a special focus on youth) by raising awareness of the facts and fallacies surrounding with the use of state-sanctioned killing around the world. ACADP publishes what the media won't tell the public.

ACADP advertises and promotes educational information about capital punishment around the world. The organization conducts correspondence with both Australian and international government/political leaders, international human rights activists/groups/organizations and the worldwide media.

ACADP is involved in various campaigns, research, monitors, gathers and divulges information, news and updates on the use of the death penalty, worldwide.

ACADP campaigns by various non-violent methods for the total abolition of the death penalty around the world, including online contributions and debating.

In addition, the ACADP guards and takes action against any calls for the reintroduction of capital punishment in Australia, including calls for the introduction of Sharia law into Australia.



AUSTRALIA AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Australia's last judicial killing was on February 3, 1967. The hanging of Ronald Ryan at Pentridge Prison aroused a storm of public anger and the biggest protests ever seen in the history of Australia, which would result in total abolition. To this day, serious doubt remains whether Ryan was guilty beyond all reasonable doubt.

There were many doubts in the Ryan capital case, total lack of scientific ballistic forensic evidence, mysterious missing pieces of vital evidence that would have cleared Ryan, ambiguities in the case, dire inconsistencies of all eyewitnesses evidence, and testimony by another prison officer that he fired the one single shot from a distance at an elevated position in a downward trajectory angle - heard by all witnesses at the scene of the crime. No person heard two shots fired.

Ryan was convicted of murder, sentenced to death and subsequently hanged by the State of Victoria based 'solely' on unsigned, unrecorded, unproven allegations of verbals/confessions, said to have been made by Ryan to police.

The Victorian Premier Henry Bolte, played a key role in the hanging of Ronald Ryan. With a state election on the horizon, Bolte took the stance to be 'tough on crime' and was determined Ryan would go to the gallows.

On March 1, 2004 Ronald Ryan's defence attorney Dr Philip Opas QC, said to ACADP ...

" ... I want to put the record straight. I want the truth told about Ronald Ryan – that an innocent man went to the gallows. I want the truth to be made available to everyone, for anyone young and old, who may want to do research into Ryan's case or research on the issue of capital punishment. I will go to my grave firmly of the opinion that Ronald Ryan did not commit murder. I refuse to believe that at any time he told anyone that he did ... "

The "facts" surrounding the Ronald Ryan capital case can be found at ...

<http://www.ronaldryan.info>

Australia officially abolished capital punishment nationwide under The Crimes (Death Penalty Abolition) Amendment Act 1985. Under Commonwealth law, the death penalty was abolished in 1973 by Section 4 of The Death Penalty Abolition Act 1973.

Under the Australian Extradition Act, a person cannot be deported from Australia to face prosecution on a capital charge if there is the slightest chance they would face the death penalty. Before deportation, there must be an assurance the death penalty will not be imposed. The extradition laws reflect Australia's bipartisan opposition to the death penalty.



Today, a minority of right-wing individuals are calling for the reintroduction of capital punishment in Australia. Some religious extremists/groups are calling for Sharia law to be introduced in Australia.

On March 10, 2010 the Australian federal parliament passed laws ensuring that capital punishment can never be reintroduced in any jurisdiction. All sides of Australian politics supported the symbolic laws, which ensures that all Australian states and territories can never reinstate the death penalty.

On May 17, 2011 the Australian Federal Government moved to block any calls for Sharia law in Australia, strongly rejecting any proposal for the introduction of sharia law, adding that there is no place for the 'eye-for-an-eye' justice in Australian society with a stable democracy.

Recent polls show approximately 70 percent of Australians support capital punishment for heinous crimes. However, Australia is also prevented from legislating for the reintroduction of capital punishment because it is party to a number of International Treaties, whose objective is total abolition of the death penalty worldwide. All Australian politicians describe this as a 'hallmark of a civilized society'.

Most morally decent people are cynical about politicians who, at times, will support capital punishment to their advantage. Most decent civilized politicians believe that capital punishment is ethically and morally abhorrent and not useful at all in fighting crime.

Then, there are politicians like who wish to make a name for themselves by calling for the reintroduction of capital punishment. But these politicians sldo refuse to inform the public of the high costs associated with capital punishment.

Contrary to popular belief, executing criminals does not save taxpayers money. The important issue of capital punishment brings a 'responsibility' by politicians to fully inform the public that legally killing people is extremely expensive to taxpayers.

Just one capital case, after all appeals have been exhausted, ends up costing taxpayers' much more money than life in prison without parole.

In all democratic nations every human being is considered innocent of an alleged crime until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt by a court of law. For this reason, certain safeguards must be used for capital cases. These safeguards make capital trials more extensive, and therefore, they last longer.

The greatest cost of capital cases would incur prior to, and during the trial, not in post-conviction and appeals proceedings.



The costs incurred for a capital trial can run into the millions of dollars. In view of the 'life-and-death issue' at stake, governments have an obligation to guarantee those prosecuted for capital cases receive the very best defence that taxpayers money can buy ... a top-notch team of the best-of-the-best lawyers with wide latitude in hiring top-notch best-of-the-best experts and consultants. All these costs would place a huge financial burden on the already over-stretched legal justice system.

After a person has been sentenced to death, various avenues for numerous appeals are available to the condemned, making the process to execution more lengthy, thereby much more expensive. The appeals process eliminates the possibility of legal and other errors in the capital cases. The process could be streamlined of course, but at a very different cost - increasing the possibility of convicting and executing an innocent/wrongly convicted person. If history were any guide, innocent or wrongly convicted people would be executed along the way. A government cannot pardon a corpse!

Evidence of the importance of the appeals process can be seen in the United States of America, where in the last thirty years alone 140 condemned prisoners have been released from death row after evidence emerged of their wrongful conviction. These prisoners had spent many years, even decades on death row awaiting execution. The appeals process saved these prisoners from execution. The fact that some legal errors have been discovered during the appeals process strongly suggests there have been other cases where legal errors have not been discovered in time and wrongly convicted people have been executed.

For example ... If Australia was to reintroduce capital punishment, federal and state taxes would need to be increased, additional hidden taxes would need to be introduced including a costly permanent capital punishment tax levy, essential community services such as health, education, etc would need to be cut drastically to pay for having the luxury of legally killing people. Every Australian man, woman and child would pay a high price for having the death penalty in use.

DEATH PENALTY AROUND THE WORLD

According to a recent United Nations Human Rights report, there are approximately 20,000 people are on death row around the world, after being convicted of various crimes, including non-violent crimes.

The death penalty around the world has two faces - one is in the international spotlight and the other is hidden from view. The death penalty in the USA is highly publicised. On the other hand, the death penalty in Asia, Middle East and Africa is shrouded in secrecy – executions are intermittently reported by officials and generally ignored by the world (including the Australian) media. In many countries state-sanctioned killings are a closely guarded secret.



In some countries, speaking out for human rights (which includes abolition of the death penalty) is considered criminal. Sadly, no one appeals for clemency for the condemned. The few local human rights defenders and family members struggling to save the lives of the condemned face harassment, intimidation and death threats.

The public is influenced to trust the criminal justice system – that capital punishment is only used for the 'worst-of-the-worst' offenders. But nothing can be further from the truth - the death penalty around the world is applied capriciously and at random.

The death penalty around the world is a lethal lottery. Politics, quality of legal counsel, police or prosecutorial misconduct, corruption, ominous jury members, who you are, your ethnicity, your financial status, your intellect, the jurisdiction where the crime is committed, and the political climate at the time of the crime or death sentence, and political rivalry are more often the determining factors - more than the actual facts of the crime itself.

Countries that carry out judicial/extra-judicial executions do not kill all those sentenced to death. They 'select' offenders to kill - known as 'legalised selective discrimination'. This selection process is known as blatant discrimination.

In the USA, the death penalty is only applied for pre-meditated murder. In most other retentionist countries the death penalty is applied for over 100 violent and non-violent crimes.

Crimes punishable by death include adultery, apostasy, blasphemy, drug-trafficking (soft and hard drugs), prostitution, homosexuality, sorcery (witchcraft), zina (sexual intercourse between partners not married to each other), individuals converting or preaching Christianity or Judaism, insulting Allah and the prophet Muhammad, corruption on Earth (can virtually mean anything), conspiring against the government and plotting to overthrow the Islamic regime.

Executions in some countries remain a sordid public spectacle. The condemned are ritually humiliated by being paraded in public and insulted before being executed by beheading, hanging, shot by firing squad, strangled (hanged by crane), and tortured to death (stoning) for the crime of adultery.

Under strict Islamic and Sharia laws, a male offender is buried up to the waist with his hands tied behind his back, while a female offender is buried up to her neck. Spectators, usually male, then carry out the stoning by hurling rocks and stones at the offender. The stones are deliberately chosen to be large enough to cause pain, but not big enough to kill the offender in just one or two strikes. Eventually (can take up to one hour or more) the offender dies from shock due to blood loss.

It is important to note that every major religion in the world preaches compassion, forgiveness and mercy over vengeance. The death penalty is inconsistent with these religious teachings. Proponents of capital punishment unfairly use religion to justify state-sanctioned killing, torture and violence.



In October 2008, thousands of people gathered to witness fifty Somali males stone a woman to death. Aisha Ibrahim Dhuhulow was found guilty of extra-marital intercourse and sentenced to death by stoning, by an Islamic Court in Kismayo, South Somalia.

In 2004, a 16-year-old Iranian girl Atefeh Rajabi, was hanged by crane in public, in Northern Iran after being sentenced to death for allegedly having committed an 'act incompatible with chastity' (also known as pre-marital sex). Her much older male co-defendant was sentenced to 40 lashes and then released.

Human Rights organizations report that tens of thousands have died hideously, customarily executed in public stadiums or street corners to the sound of public cheers. The Human Rights Committee established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has stated that public executions are, 'incompatible with human dignity' which have a de-humanising effect on society.

There are deep concerns at the continued imposition of corporal punishment such as human limb amputation or decapitation (a form of torture) and floggings. Other punishments include cutting off the right hand at the wrist for stealing and 40-80 lashes for drinking alcohol, gambling or having pre-marital sex. Some condemned offenders are flogged in public prior to being executed.

ACADP believes that capital punishment can never be justified because it is pernicious to society through its example of barbarity towards humanity. Although this brutal act removes dangerous offenders from society permanently and protects citizens, life imprisonment achieves the same objective. Furthermore, capital punishment is an ineffective deterrent and it does not provide for clemency and rehabilitation of offenders.

Present and past Australian Governments' have publicly stated that they oppose the death penalty for Australians only - that the death penalty is 'unacceptable in all circumstances and in all jurisdictions'. The bipartisan policy is that executing Australian citizens is barbaric and seeks clemency, yet the execution of non-Australians is acceptable. Discrimination ??? Surely, these comments have not gone unnoticed internationally !!! Obviously, principle is sacrificed for political advantage. The rest of the world can only see a country that speaks with a forked tongue about this ultimate human rights issue as hypocritical. Internationally, this bipartisan policy damages and forfeits Australia's credibility over human rights.

A global unbiased effort is needed to abolish the death penalty around the world.

Working for total abolition of the death penalty around the world, ACADP does not condone the alleged crimes of convicted offenders.

ACADP has the deepest sympathy for victims of crimes and their families, as it does for the innocent family members and loved ones of the condemned. There has never been anything 'good' achieved by executing offenders.



WHEN JUSTICE ERRS

Colin Campbell Ross, a 28-year-old publican was convicted and sentenced to death for the rape and murder of 12-year-old Alma Tirtschke. Ross was hanged in 1922 despite his claim of innocence.

In 2008 (eighty-six years later) the State of Victoria granted Ross an official posthumous pardon, after new research discredited the evidence used for his conviction. The only physical evidence connecting Ross to the crime were hairs on a blanket which prosecutors claimed was Tirtschke's. However, recent forensic tests now prove the original hair samples did not come from the victim.

The following Australians were convicted of murder, and later found to have been innocent/wrongly convicted. If capital punishment had been a sentencing option, they could have been executed.

- Frederick McDermott - convicted of murder in 1947. He served seven years in prison before a Royal Commission established his innocence. He was released from prison and granted a pardon for wrongful conviction.
- Edward Charles Splatt - convicted of murder in 1978. He served six years before a Royal Commission established his innocence. He was released from prison and granted a pardon for wrongful conviction.
- Paul Alister, Timothy Anderson and Ross Dunn - convicted of conspiracy to murder in 1979. They served seven years in prison before a Judicial Inquiry established their innocence. They were released from prison and granted pardons for wrongful conviction.
- Douglas Harry Rendall - convicted of murder in 1980. He served nine years in prison before a Judicial Inquiry established he was innocent. He was released from prison and granted a pardon for wrongful conviction.
- Alice Lindy Chamberlain - convicted of murder in 1982. She served four years in prison before a Royal Commission established she was innocent. She was released from prison, granted a pardon and compensated for wrongful conviction.
- Barry Mannix - arrested for the murder of his father in 1983. He alleged the police had fabricated a confession to the murder. Later, three males were arrested and convicted of the crime. Mannix was released from prison.
- Kelvin Condren - convicted of murder in 1984. He served six years in prison before the High Court of Australia and Queensland Court of Criminal Appeal cast serious doubts on his alleged confession and conviction. Condren was released from prison.
- Roger Graham Bawden - confessed to a murder in 1990, which he had committed seventeen years earlier. Another man, Johann Ernst Siegfried Pohl, had been convicted of the murder in 1973. Pohl had served ten years in prison. A Judicial Inquiry established Pohl was innocent. Pohl was released from prison and granted a pardon.



There is no way of knowing how many people have been executed in the past that may have been innocent or wrongly convicted. Members of the jury are not perfect human beings and sometimes they do make wrong verdicts. The courts and defence lawyers go on to other cases. Governments do not generally entertain claims of innocence after the defendant is dead.

The State cannot pardon a corpse. It is too late to reverse the decision or compensate the offender for a miscarriage of justice after the death sentence has been carried out. In addition, the right to compensation for each family member of a wrongly executed person would total in the millions of dollars.

Those who argue for the death penalty on the grounds that at least the killer is removed permanently from society must also keep in mind that there is always the possibility, however remote, that an innocent person may be executed.

The USA boasts to have to best-of-the-best criminal justice system in the world. However, since 1973, a total of 140 death row prisoners in the United States have been released after evidence emerged, during their appeals' process, of their innocence or wrongful conviction.

Most of these death row prisoners had spent more than a decade on death row and some had come within hours of being executed. There is no such thing as a perfect criminal just system - legal mistakes do occur.

The fact that some mistakes were discovered in time strongly suggests that there have been other occasions when mistakes were not discovered in time and wrongly convicted people have been executed.

Sadly, every politician around the world knows the safest course for their political career is to keep silent ... silent about the tens of thousands of people that are put to death by Governments each year, worldwide.

Killing human beings as a deterrent to crime is not a measure of ethical and moral decency. Those who argue this point never seem to acknowledge the deterrent quality or punitive power of life sentences without parole. There is nothing positive or uplifting about state-sanctioned killing. Capital punishment actually brutalizes and degrades a society – inspiring more acts of violence because it teaches children that it is “alright” to legally kill some people.

Furthermore, the use of capital punishment around the world has been proven to have no deterrent effect on crime. We are human - not animals – we cannot pretend to be humane - yet, at the same time act out like animals.

ACADP's opposition to the death penalty is all about Governments' legally killing people - it's just that simple!



THE DEATH PENALTY - ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST

FOR The death penalty deters crime.

AGAINST Scientific studies have consistently failed to find convincing evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments. Most murders are unplanned, spur-of-the-moment passion crimes. People who commit these murders are not thinking about the death penalty. Murderers seldom plan their crimes; the small numbers who do, believe they will avoid detection and therefore are not deterred by the thought of the death penalty. Mentally unbalanced people and those driven by political or religious fantasies are not deterred by the death penalty. With the exception of professional hit men very few people are in a rational frame of mind when they commit murder. The most recent survey of research findings on the relation between the death penalty and homicide rates, conducted for The United Nations in 1988 and updated in 2002, concluded ... "it is not prudent to accept the hypothesis that capital punishment deters murder to a marginally greater extent than does the threat and application of the supposedly lesser punishment of life imprisonment." (Reference: Roger Hood, *The Death Penalty: A World-wide Perspective*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, third edition, 2002, p. 230)

FOR If you take the life of another you should lose your life. You lose the right to your life. The State should take your life in return – an eye-for-an-eye.

AGAINST This common argument has been used to support the use of capital punishment without regard to the calculus or the true meaning. Governments would have to execute millions of killers - in time - to kill every killer that meets that 'eye-for-an-eye' imperative. Without discrimination, Governments should also kill the killers, which kill the killers. What we would see is a bloodbath of human slaughter on the face of this planet. But Governments do discriminate when it suits them - you see, Governments do not kill all killers, they 'select' the killers they want to kill. It is called 'selective eligibility' for state-sanctioned killing. Some condemned prisoners believe that 'judicial killing' is not a punishment but freedom from this world. Some prisoners request to be killed.

FOR The death penalty is only used for the 'worst-of-the-worst' convicted offenders.

AGAINST Nothing can be further from the truth. The public is influenced to trust the criminal justice system, that capital punishment is only used for the 'worst-of-the-worst' offenders. The truth is that the death penalty around the world is applied arbitrarily, capriciously and at random. The death penalty is a lethal lottery. Politics, quality of legal counsel, police or prosecutorial misconduct, eyewitness errors, false or coerced confessions, use of "snitches" as informants, corruption, ominous jury members, who you are, your ethnicity, your financial status, your intellect, the jurisdiction where the crime is committed, the political climate at the time of the crime or death sentence and political rivalry are more often the determining factors - more than the actual facts of the crime itself.



Fact: Countries that carry out judicial and extra-judicial executions do not kill all those sentenced to death. They 'select' the offenders they want to execute. This is known as 'legalised selective discrimination'. Almost never are executed offenders in the category of the 'worst-of-the-worst' offenders.

FOR Countries that use capital punishment have lower crime rates.

AGAINST Countries that execute their criminals are mostly repressive nations, which either limit or do not release accurate information on the true crime rates, death row numbers, or execution statistics. This gives the public the false assertion that the use of capital punishment is a deterrent to crime. In most retentionist countries, various crimes are committed with total impunity (eg. honour killings). The victims of crime/human rights abuses are systematically denied justice by the authorities – repeated and deliberate failure to bring offenders to justice. Also, crime rates and statistics from male-dominated oppressive regimes are unreliable, because victims of crime do not report certain crimes (eg. rape), or the authorities alter/ignore the actual crime. According to latest reports by Amnesty International, retentionist countries continue to have some of the highest crime rates per head of population in comparison to abolitionist countries. The USA is the only western nation that still practises the death penalty, yet continues to have a crime rate eight times higher per head of population by comparison to other western nations that abolished the death penalty decades ago.

FOR Keeping criminals in prison is wasting taxpayers' money. Executing criminals saves taxpayers' money.

AGAINST This is one big fallacy. Fact is that capital punishment is very expensive to taxpayers. According to Death Penalty Information Centre in USA, there is a mountain of evidence that just one capital case, after all appeals have been exhausted, ends up costing taxpayers much more money than life in prison without parole. In all democratic nations every human being is considered innocent of an alleged crime until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt by a court of law. For this reason, certain safeguards must be used for capital cases. These safeguards make capital trials more extensive, and therefore, they last longer.

The greatest cost of capital cases would incur prior to, and during the trial, not in post-conviction and appeals proceedings. The costs incurred for just one capital trial run into the millions of dollars. In view of the 'life-and-death issue' at stake, Governments have an obligation to guarantee those prosecuted for capital cases receive the very best defence that taxpayers money can buy - a top-notch team of the best-of-the-best lawyers, with wide latitude in hiring top-notch best-of-the-best experts and consultants. After a person has been sentenced to death, various avenues for numerous appeals are available to the condemned, making the process to execution more lengthy, thereby much more expensive. Appeals eliminate the possibility of errors in the capital case of the convicted offender. The process could be streamlined of course, but at a very different cost - increasing the possibility of convicting and executing an innocent/wrongly convicted person.



All these costs place a huge financial burden on the already over-stretched legal justice system. Unfortunately, politicians and the media keep this fact a closely guarded secret. Hence, the high cost of state-sanctioned killing is not reported. Those who passed mathematics know the costly fact, but they do not want the public to know the truth - you see, it might change your mind on capital punishment.

For example: If Australia was to re-introduce capital punishment, federal and state taxes would need to be increased, additional hidden taxes would need to be introduced and essential community services, such as health, education, etc. would need to be drastically cut to pay for having the luxury of executing just one criminal per year. A permanent and costly 'capital punishment levy' would be introduced - we would all pay - every man, woman and child would pay a high price for having the death penalty in use.

FOR The appeals process of death penalty cases should be shortened or eliminated to save taxpayers money.

AGAINST And, if history is any guide, innocent and wrongly convicted people would be executed along the way, as some have been in the past. The appeals process eliminates errors within the criminal justice system, but what are one or two mistakes when death penalty supporters talk about the expeditious eradication of criminals? Even if all appeals proceedings were abolished the capital system would still be more expensive than a sentence of life imprisonment without parole.

FOR Lethal injection is not cruel - it is like putting your dog to sleep, which makes it way too humane.

AGAINST State-sanctioned killing never seems to satisfy supporters of the death penalty - they also want the offender tortured during the execution. Fact is, there is no humane method for exterminating a healthy human life. There is no humane method for executing a healthy human being. Many incidents of botched lethal injections have been reported. Whatever method is used to achieve a state-sanctioned killing, it is brutal as it is cruel as it is inhuman. It is degrading to society because it further brutalises that society.

FOR If killers are not executed, there is a possibility they will escape from prison to kill again. Capital punishment ensures that the offender will never escape to re-offend.

AGAINST This is the ultimate of excuses for the death penalty. Isn't the government supposed to provide the best of safeguards and security to guarantee the public that prisons are escape-proof? Must we start killing prisoners because governments are failing their responsibility to adequately protect society from dangerous offenders? To suggest we kill offenders on the 'slight chance' that they may escape from prison is immoral as it is outrageous.

Prison authorities/officials are supposed to ensure, absolutely, that correctional facilities are secure and escape-proof, without cutting corners for extra profits.



FOR For better or worse, the execution of a criminal absolutely guarantees that they will not commit a crime again.

AGAINST Of course, and a life sentence without parole approaches the same promise without the need for a Government to spend millions of extra dollars just to perform a 'revenge' act on the offender. To execute criminals on the hypothesis that they 'might' kill again is preposterous. It is like saying, don't drive your car ever again in the slight chance you 'might' cause a fatality.

FOR The death penalty brings 'closure' for the victims' family.

AGAINST As if another killing closes doors! Supporters of the death penalty often say that state-sanctioned killing bring closure to the victims family. But how can two wrongs make a right? How can one killing then justify another? That is not true justice - it is quite simply an act of pure "revenge". Tragically, the loss of a loved one is permanent. Their sorrow and the pain will always be with them. Killing the offender does nothing to relieve their pain. What it does accomplish is grief to the innocent family members and loved ones of the executed - it creates yet another set of victims in society. Many family members of victims of crime say they can hardly wait to gain 'closure' by the execution of the offender. But what the public never hears is any of these same people say years later, that they found this 'promising closure'. Supporters of the death penalty argue that a death sentence will bring the victims family with some sort of relief - focusing on anger, hatred and rage, rather than focusing on healing. Waiting, wishing, and seeing the offender executed by the State is not going to help the healing process. This only leads victims' families to more despair over their loss.

FOR Many opponents of the death penalty have never been the victim of a violent act, or know of someone who has been killed by another person.

AGAINST There are many victims of crime and their families that seek true justice and not purely revenge via the death penalty. It is abhorrent to suggest that only the victims of crime or the families of victims of crime have the 'exclusive right of say' in this matter, and that the rest of us are not qualified to render an opinion on the argument that we can neither claim a homicide in the family, nor appreciate horrific tragedies endured by others. When the State kills, it kills in all our names. When the State kills, it is everyone's business.

FOR Executing the offender is 'justice served' for the victim/s family.

AGAINST Justice is a myth, just like deterrence, and all the fancy words that supporters of the death penalty use to justify state-sanctioned killing in the name of justice. Killing offenders based on what might make some victims feel better, is not justice served. Justice served, is when the hurt of victims and their families comes to an end. The fact is that no amount of punishment for offenders can make the hurt go away. There is never an end to the hurt from violent crime. The only satisfaction that a state-sanctioned execution brings to victims of crime and their families is that another human being has been legally killed (aka retribution, revenge, an eye-for-an-eye) and more innocent victims family members are created. Society disregards the suffering families of the executed.



Incarceration of offenders protects the innocents from the dangerous.
Incarceration (loss of freedom) is true punishment.

FOR Opponents of the death penalty should allow buildings of extra prisons to house all criminals next to their houses.

AGAINST There's no need. There are correct zoning laws for commercial, industrial and residential buildings. Besides, there is always land space to build new prisons, which creates employment. But that should not be necessary if the majority of offenders who are in prison for non-violent crimes (eg. petty offenders, drug addicts, the mentally ill and the mentally retarded) be given alternative punishment rather than locking them up in already overcrowded prisons. There are many alternatives to imprisonment for the majority of non-violent offenders, such as providing medical, psychological and rehabilitation treatment in secure state-funded facilities.

FOR Public opinions overwhelmingly support the death penalty.

AGAINST Every country shows overwhelming support for the death penalty. The reasons for this public support are complex. If the public were fully informed of the facts and fallacies surrounding the use of the death penalty more people would oppose it. Education and moral leadership shape an informed public opinion. It is the responsibility of governments and the media to lead public opinion in factual matters of human rights - the death penalty cannot be separated from human rights.

The decision to abolish the death penalty has to be taken by governments and legislators, even though public majority supports it. For example; civilized governments would never introduce laws such as human torture, human slavery, etc. even if public majority supported it.

FOR Some criminals are abnormal/sick, and should be exterminated.

AGAINST Research shows that most people on death row suffer from mental retardation, mental illness or have acquired brain trauma. Mental illness does not discriminate - it can happen to anyone at anytime. The threat of the death penalty does not deter mentally unbalanced people from committing crimes. Mental illness is defined as - any of various conditions characterized by impairment of an individual's normal cognitive, emotional, or behavioural functioning, and caused by social, psychological, biochemical, genetic, or other factors, such as brain disease, infections or head trauma.

Mental illnesses disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder and borderline personality disorder. Most people who suffer from mental illness turn to various substance abuse in an attempt to, escape or numb, emotional painful feelings of depression, fear, anxiety, delusions, hallucinations, mental confusion, mood swings, etc. Many attempt suicide or request authorities to kill them - also known as state-assisted suicide.



FOR Executed offenders' human organs should be harvested for human organ donations/transplants for medically ill people who need new organs.

AGAINST The reality is that the majority of death row prisoners and executed prisoners either have been, or are substance addicts. In addition, almost every prisoner awaiting state-sanctioned execution are taking a variety of multiple prescribed medications for psychiatric illness and various medical health problems. Many are infected with HIV, hepatitis and other viral infections. Over time, chronic health conditions and long-term medications cause some degree of damage to human organs - deemed unsuitable donors for organ transplants.

FOR Criminals should not be allowed to breathe - they waste free oxygen. These sub-human, animals, scumbags, pieces of manure, etc. should be exterminated.

AGAINST Undiluted hatred! The death penalty really is a "legalized hate crime". Governments allow the public to hate certain individuals in society, making the death penalty an acceptable form of state-sanctioned violence. It is homicidal retribution - homicidal vengeance, which breeds and feeds more hatred and more violence in society. Supporters of the death penalty love killing - it gives them a temporary thrill. Truth is, nobody kills for love. A civilized society should never tolerate such hatred for certain human beings that we lower ourselves to such an inhuman act of legalised killing.

A decent and civilized society simply cannot accept the proposition that a government, any government, has the ultimate power over its citizens - the "right" to kill a human being in a well-organized pre-meditated cold-blooded ritual, and call ourselves civilized. Capital punishment teaches us that it is "all right" to kill "chosen" offenders – that it is "alright" to hate certain individuals. Society is encouraged to publicly express hatred and killing for some offenders.

FOR The death penalty is no different to abortion – both methods kill.

AGAINST Human Rights includes Womens Rights. Nobody has a right to tell a woman what to do with her body. A woman has the ultimate fundamental human right to do as she wishes with her own body.

Abortion cannot be separated from Womens' Rights. A fetus is "doing" something to the woman - using her body against her will. A fetus is doing it involuntarily but nevertheless, if the woman is committing murder by having an abortion, she is doing it to someone who is also doing something to her. Many other instances of using someone's body against their will are illegal, such as rape.

By medical definition, the fetus is a biological parasite taking nutrition from its host (the woman) but gives nothing back in terms of health benefits, although it can threaten a woman's life. Pregnancy can often cause emotional and physical health problems for women, including death.

ACADP is not pro-abortion ... it is pro-choice (aka Womens' Rights).



THE DEATH PENALTY - A 'Government Program'

The death penalty law is a discriminative 'Government Program'.

Research, educate and inform yourself fully, on all issues surrounding the use of the death penalty - the reality of how it is imposed arbitrarily capriciously and at random, why it is applied to some people who commit non-violent crime and not to others to commit violent crime, why some death row prisoners are 'chosen or selected' to be legally killed by Governments while others are not, the discriminatory use of the death penalty against the poor, the disadvantaged, the mentally ill, the mentally disabled, the uneducated, the minorities of racial ethnic and religious communities, the serious flaws in every criminal justice system, the legal and other errors that occur due to police interrogation or corruption, prosecutorial misconduct, inadequate legal representation, inadequate case and forensics investigation and jury members' bias and prejudice.

Very often political rivalries between Governments play a major role in executions.

There are no powerful or wealthy people on death row. Discrimination ???

In the words of former Illinois (USA) Governor George Ryan ... "Our death penalty system is haunted by the demon of error - error in determining guilt - and error in determining 'who' among the guilty deserves to die."

Only then, will you be in a position to decide whether to support state-sanctioned killing or oppose it. Remember this ... ninety-nine percent of all death row prisoners around the world are powerless, penniless, mentally ill/incompetent, brain-damaged, uneducated, substance addicts, the products of pre-natal abuse and the products of extreme childhood emotional/psychological/physical abuse.

Whether you are for or against the death penalty, nobody can dispute that it is a barbaric, brutal, cruel, degrading, inhuman and uncivilized form of punishment. It is the most pre-meditated, meticulously prepared, carefully planned, cold-blooded 'legal ritual' of killing a human being by Government-chosen stealth executioners who go home to their families, still able to sleep peacefully at night. The job of executioner should be looked at with the ultimate of contempt !!!



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