

Capital punishment



Be it resolved that capital punishment be legalised in Canada. The death penalty was officially abolished in Canada in 1976 when the Canadian government held a free vote in Parliament to eradicate it from the Criminal Code and over sixty countries around the world have done the same.

According to a poll conducted by Angus Reid, a Canadian sociologist, 21 percent of Canadians feel that murderers can be rehabilitated and 54 percent feel that although the convicted murderer has taken a life, it still is not justifiable to take the murderer's life as the punishment.

Capital punishment should not be legalised because it does not provide a useful purpose to society, it does not promote the rehabilitation of criminals and it is more retributive than restorative. Capital punishment is not in any way advantageous, if not an inconvenience, to society. After having reviewed numerous studies of the costs of the death penalty in the United States, Dr. Richard C. Dieter, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center, had found that it costs more than life imprisonment.

The costs consists of all that is needed for a regular trial plus more trial time, experts, attorneys, two trials for guilt and punishment and multiple appeals while the inmates are held a high security confinement centers, which costs a lot of money that ultimately comes from taxpayers. In general, killing a person is not humane, yet that is the definition of capital punishment.

According to Amnesty International, “ the death penalty is the ultimate denial of human rights,” since the criminal's right to live is ignored.

Therefore if the government began to reinstate this punishment, there might be distrust within the citizens of the country. In addition, capital punishment

is useless in the sense that it will not resurrect the victim, nor will it provide closure to their relations. Criminal trials and the execution usually offer a temporary sense of closure, however many crime victims have stated that the continuous repetition of their unfortunate stories, the formal legal rules and the years between appeals have only increased stress and have postponed their emotional recovery.

Overall the death penalty only creates more distress for humanity rather than peace. Through the use of capital punishment, the rehabilitation of the criminal into a useful citizen of society is not possible. Education provided within the prison allows the convicts to stay updated on society and lets them enhance their knowledge. This is crucial because studies show that numerous criminals do not have a strong basic grade school foundation.

Without an education, it would be extremely difficult for them to acquire jobs, therefore they return to their life of crime. Additionally, rehabilitation guarantees that the criminals are socially adjusted. Psychological assessments are used to test for mental or physical disabilities. Many convicts are capable of returning to society as fairly well-balanced citizens, if they choose to participate in counseling and further assessments. With the use of capital punishment, criminals sentenced to death would not be able to be rehabilitated.

The different stages of rehabilitation would have many positive effects for the inmates and their families since their criminal behaviour would be cared for and they could function in everyday life. Rehabilitation of criminals is a far better solution in contrast to the death penalty. Finally, capital

punishment is less a form of justice, but more a form of revenge. The death penalty is based on the concept of retribution: “ an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. ” Retribution does not protect society, instead it is a way of satisfying anger.

Retribution is when punishment is seen as the best solution to a crime.

According to Raymond A. Schroth, Jesuit Priest and Community Professor of the Humanities at St. Peter’s College, revenge is not a good emotion since it creates a need for violence. More specifically, the need to kill the person who has killed someone you love, which would ultimately continue the cycle of violence which would unfortunately destroy the victim in addition to the criminal. Rather than seeking revenge, the victim and the offender should take the time to figure out the best solution.

Therefore in the future, the victim might be able to forgive the criminal instead of continuing the cycle of violence. However, that is not possible with capital punishment because forgiveness takes a long time, something they don’t have when the criminal is scheduled to be executed. Seeking out revenge is won’t bring justice to the victim because it will only lead to unresolved problems with can no longer be solved when the offender has been executed. The life of the criminal will never compensate for the life of the victim and will not provide permanent closure.

Without the death penalty there would be plenty of time to see justice served correctly and it gives the victim’s family more time to heal and prepare to face the offender. Naturally, capital punishment should not be reinstated in Canada because the effects of an execution do not benefit

society, rehabilitating the offender is not an option because of the short time available and it promotes violence and vengeful emotions which may lead to an infinite cycle of violent behaviour.