

Justice: an Editorial

BY MATT W.

Imagine if you had to live by these rules: Rule number 22, "If anyone commits a robbery and is caught, he shall be put to death." Rule number 3, "If anyone brings an accusation of any crime before the elders, and does not prove what he has charged, if it is a capital offense, he shall be put to death." These are just two of the 282 laws from the Code of Hammurabi, a set of laws written thousands of years ago in ancient Babylon. It seems strange that death is so easily dealt as a punishment. Unfortunately the death penalty is still in use all over the world. The death penalty includes punishments like beheading in Saudi Arabia, hanging in Japan, shooting in Vietnam, and even stoning in Afghanistan. All of these methods are still in use all over the world. It is a shame that even our great country still practices the death penalty. Let's look at the facts and figures about the death penalty.

Over half the countries in the world have abolished the death penalty completely. Eleven countries have abolished the death penalty for all but exceptional offenses, such as war crimes. Over 40 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes since 1990.

The death penalty, when abolished, is rarely reintroduced. In fact only four countries have reintroduced the death penalty. Two, Nepal and the Philippines, have since abolished it again.

As you may remember, and I'm sure you do, former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was sentenced to death some time ago. He was found guilty of crimes against humanity, including the killing of 148 people in Dujail in 1982. I am sure that many of you liked to see Saddam at the end of a rope, and maybe I agree with you. Maybe he was just another Hitler or a Mussolini. But he still had the right to a fair trial. Although I may have made where I stand on this issue clear, I don't mean to persuade you to agree with me, even though I hope you do. Just ask yourself again what you think about the death penalty, not just in the United States, but also all over the world. The sentence of death is a serious thing for humans to consider.

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