

May 15, 1979

LB 262

They can commute death sentences and to say that this is going to change, there is no difference. We are implementing by this proposal that has been worked out by any number of people in this Legislature, probably the stiffest, toughest, most honestly workable penalty in the United States. Of those states, and there are fourteen of them that have eliminated the death penalty, most of them have life or twenty years, this is the first one where you would have an honest true and effective thirty year penalty and to those who would say, well then that means we got to keep the character there for thirty years and pay for him, I would submit that that means now you keep the character and he starts working and paying back society and instead of costing ten and fifteen thousand dollars a year, he generates one way or another, he generates ten or fifteen thousand dollars a year in productive efforts for society. Now as long as we are hung up on the death penalty which we are not allowed to use, which we do not implement, we can never get over here and correct this other problem, the problem of a guy laying on his cot doing nothing. Until we get over this hurdle we can't put the 80 or 85% of them who are doing nothing to work so that they are paying instead of costing society. That is why I support the repeal because I want to start implementing severe penalties, some penalties that don't take five or ten years to reach, some penalties that finally work.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute.

SENATOR DeCAMP: That is why I urge you as responsible legislators looking at the entire picture which very frequently the public is denied, to go with this proposal. I would tell you this. To those who say well you just have to fry them, you just have to make it work. You don't delay. It is not us that has created that situation of delay and impossible application of the death penalty. -It is the U.S. Supreme Court so the various rulings of due process and rights to legal aid attorneys, so on and so forth, I am addressing a problem created by others over which we can't solve it any other way and saying this is the best, most economical way to make our system of law enforcement function.

SPEAKER MARVEL: We are speaking on the Venditte amendments to 262. Senator Fowler, do you wish to speak to the Venditte amendments?

SENATOR FOWLER: I would call the question.