

this bill goes across the Board. Senator Hefner indicated he did research that indicates the death penalty is a deterrent. I would like to be privy to that research because I don't think I could even make that claim on the other side. I don't think I could even in good conscience say that it isn't a deterrent even though I wish I had research to back that position up. Because every study and everything that I have ever read or seen on it seems to leave some real serious questions as to whether it is or is not a deterrent to crime. I don't think we can say conclusively that it is a deterrent. I don't think we can say conclusively that it isn't a deterrent. I don't think we can hang our hat on that argument. I don't think that can be an argument for or an argument against imposing the death penalty. So if that is not an argument, then I think we have to ask ourselves why the death penalty? Is it punishment, whatever punishment is? When I see a situation like the situation occurring in Utah where the person to be executed is actually asking, requesting, begging for that act, can we really say then that it is punishment? I don't think we can say that. Then, why? Certainly when we look at all the numbers of people incarcerated in the United States, certainly breaking it down to the State of Nebraska, all the people we have incarcerated in this state, the percentage of people incarcerated in there for capital crimes is so small we certainly can't use an economical argument. So then why? Why do we vote to keep or impose a death penalty?

SENATOR LAMB: You have one minute, Senator.

SENATOR DWORAK: If it is not deterrent, if it is not punishment, if it is not facility or economy, then why do we vote for the death penalty, something this serious, something this grave, taking of a human life? There is only one other reason that I can see and I don't think that is reason enough. It is not reason enough for this person. I can't believe it would be reason enough for any person. And that would be vengeance. That is not enough of a reason to take a human life.

SENATOR LAMB: Senator Kahle.

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. President and members, just to answer Senator Dworak's comments about pushing a button and feeling guilty about it, I guess you could feel guilty about not pushing the button that would cause the death penalty to happen, because if that deters even one crime from an innocent person, I wouldn't have any trouble doing it. We have a lot...our discussion has been low key this afternoon, no one has raised their voice, and I hope I can do the same.