

to read something that a judge on the U. S. Supreme Court stated so that you all will understand that we are talking about something other than drunk driving laws. This has to do with presentence investigative material which had to be shown to a defendant who had been sentenced to death. Stevens said the court's new rules regarding data in presentence reports were necessary because "death is a different kind of punishment than any other. It is of vital importance to the defendant and the community that any decisions to impose the death sentence be and appear to be based on reason rather than caprice." We are talking about something which is absolutely irreversible and I was hoping that the death penalty issue would not be mixed up with some of the other things that we talk about. The death penalty has been declared even by those who favor it to be an enormous penalty, one different from every other penalty. That is what the State of Nebraska Supreme Court declared during a case where it was upholding a death sentence. So we are not talking about drunk driving laws and to do that is to muddy the water. As for the other comments that Senator Firsch made about a law enforcement officer's life having more than anybody elses, from my understanding of what those who offered that amendment said was not that the life is worth more or less, there was no comparison about the value of lives. The idea was to build in some kind of mechanism of control that those who offered the amendment felt would be necessary in these penal facilities. So it is not weighing the comparative value of life but rather building in what they think is a necessary control. As one who is opposed to the death penalty under all circumstances, it is difficult for me to be still and hold my tongue on any of these amendments because I don't think that the death penalty does anything except reek vengeance and give a temporary satisfaction to people who equate punishment with some kind of deep need within themselves to expiate some type of sinfulness on their own part, and by using the philosophy of the scapegoat, they punish somebody else, not for what that somebody else did, but for the guilt that they themselves carry around with them. It has been found that the people who are most compassionate and humane are the ones who least want to do terrible things to other people and that is what those terms mean but they find out that the ones who are most compassionate and humane are often the ones who suffer the greatest. They are the ones who tend to be forgiving, but the ones who are hard and cold and demanding of punishment can be found in other aspects of their life to be lacking in compassion, a depth of understanding or consideration of all issues when you are talking about a complex subject. It happens now that we are talking about the taking of the life