

else on the committee had any questions, nobody had any comments so there were parents and family members of victims coming to the Legislature saying, that if you are going to be vindictive, if you are going to lash out don't do it and say you are doing it in my behalf because I don't want you to do it. What you do is aggravate an already bad situation. What the Legislature should be is a body of people who think, who study, who enlighten themselves continually on the issues that are important to society. We should be a group of teachers and instructors. We should raise the level of awareness of the populous at large. We should show by example the way the principles we espouse should be implemented. When on the one hand we lament the number of crimes committed with guns and then by our official actions sanction state killing there is an inconsistency here. The public is entitled to believe that killing is the way to handle certain matters. It is for each person to make that decision. But, if you look at it in a strictly humanistic sense or moralistic sense, one person does not have the right to set a standard by which he can take another persons life. Two people do not multiply a right that one of them doesn't have so that the two of them because they outnumber the one to be killed would have that moral right. Three people don't have that right. One hundred people do not have the right. Three hundred and fifty thousand, one million five hundred thousand don't have the right. But if they arrogate to themselves the right to establish that killing is proper, that killing may be done by those who happen to be in power and command then whenever any smaller group has the upper hand on any group even smaller than itself, decides to set a standard whereby killing is just, then they are justified in doing that based on the principle established by society itself. As difficult as it may be, as difficult as it may be, the state must arrive at the point where it will no longer kill its citizens. As barbaric as England was and some of its top statesmen said, that England is praised all over the world for the fairness of its judicial system, but it is universally condemned for the barbaric, barbarousness of its punishments the same can be said about this country. While speaking more about human rights than any country on the face of the earth, it is the only western nation still having a death penalty, the only western nation that kills its citizens. The reason I say "western" is because in some peoples thinking western denotes highly civilized. But, if America's attitude towards its citizens is the standard to be adopted by the rest of the world, then perhaps what Ambrose Bierce said a long time ago is