

Maybe if I had a family member who had confessed to a murder and somebody subsequently was arrested and sentenced to die on it, I might be anxious to hasten that man who was sentenced to die to his death, too. Wouldn't I? And they would make sure that I stayed out of the State of Nebraska while all this was going on, wouldn't they? When you are so exploitative that you encourage people who have lost a family member to homicide, to nurse those negative attitudes, to say they're entitled to an execution of somebody else, there is no psychiatrist or psychologist worthy of his or her salt who will say that those are not destructive, hurtful attitudes. Those people don't need an execution, they need psychological counseling. And it makes no sense and it is not compassionate to match victims against victims for a small group of very loud people to say that they speak for the family of all victims when they don't. At the hearing, there were families who had lost members to murder and they have spoken against the death penalty. One family, the Messners, have said that all it will do is increase and multiply the grief they have already felt and they are working assiduously to try to rescue the man who is on death row convicted of having murdered the family member, the victim's family trying to rescue the convicted murderer from the death sentence. My nephew was murdered a little more than a year ago. Those people out there don't speak for me. They can't say that every family of victims is comprised of people who are vindictive and have that urge for vengeance and will nurse it and nurse it for over a decade and derive our only identity from that one unfortunate event. And when that one thing, if it occurs, is taken away, I become no man, no woman. I have no identity. I don't exist. I have no celebrity. Nobody asks me questions. These are some of the perversities that the death penalty brings about in this society. While the Otey case was pending before the Pardons Board, I never saw such an outpouring of public hatred, divisiveness, hostility, demands for vengeance in the name of an activity that is supposed to heal and make society better. Do those things make society better? Is Nebraska a better place as a result of that divisive period when the Otey matter was before the Pardons Board?

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Is there less likelihood that murders will be committed? Ironically there was a spate of murders during that time when you can't say people were unaware of a death penalty because that's all that was in the news. But there comes a