

but, again, it's that response to what they perceive or think they perceive is required by the public. But to start looking at the practical implications of trying to administer a system which is intrinsically unfair, inherently unjust and, to my way of thinking, irredeemably evil and immoral, there was a county, and I won't mention it by name, but I'll share the articles with some of you if you care to see them, where a former police chief murdered a woman and skipped town. And the people in that county said, we hope he is never found because we cannot afford...we cannot afford to pay the cost of a capital prosecution. Well, the individual was caught when somebody saw a picture or a story about him on one of these television programs and he was brought back. And that county agreed to allow him to plead to something so relatively insignificant that he may be out of prison now. That shows that financial considerations do enter into whether or not a death penalty is sought. When we have a punishment so horrendous, it should not be subject to the type of arbitrariness and capriciousness that exists...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...not only in Nebraska but every state that has a death penalty law. In Texas, where they execute people routinely, they have one of the highest murder rates in the country. The application of the death penalty has had a contrary effect and this is a laboratory case where you can look at the statistics and see exactly what is happening. And there should be no pride taken by any state or public official in the fact that it is engaged in the work of ceremonial killing. So, from time to time, as we discuss this bill, I'm going to raise some of those points while also trying to help massage this language so that it says no more than what we want it to say.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Hartnett, on the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Madam President and members, Senator Kristensen, if I can ask you a question.

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR HARTNETT: I think Senator Bromm hit on a point I thought that I kind of...where the counties have to participate some way. And I thought when you were closing on your amendment