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The Ineffectiveness of the Death Penalty in Preventing Crime

There are few matters in the U.S. that have been as contentious as the use of the death penalty punishing severe crimes. One of the main reasons as to why some people propose for the approval of the death penalty is to reduce the rates of heinous crimes in the country. They believe that that the implementation of the death penalty would make people to be afraid of committing crimes. According to an article in the Opinion Front, “there is very little statistical data to prove that it is effective in preventing serious crimes. It is impossible to determine how many murders could have been prevented or how many people have been killed because of the presence or absence of death penalty legislation.” Whereas the death penalty has been believed to be the best way of punishment, it is not an effective for preventing them from committing crimes and should therefore be abolished.

Firstly, there is no proof that the death penalty actually does prevent people from committing crimes. Deterrence is amongst the arguments that many people put forward while supporting the death penalty. The supporters of this notion view death penalty as a swift as well as certain way of punishment. However, there are no scientific researches that have been carried out to show that this type of punishment is effective towards deterring criminals from committing capital crimes. According to Ehrenfreund’s article "There’s Still No Evidence That Executions Deter Criminals" in the Washington Post - Despite extensive research on the question, criminologists have been unable to assemble a strong case that capital punishment deters crime. It is worth noting that murderers and other criminals rarely think about the variety of likely punishments prior to committing crimes such as homicide.

Secondly, the death penalty is ineffective in the prevention of criminal offenses because of the concerns of wrongful convictions that may result into innocent people being killed by the states. According to a research by the Pew Research Center, “27% of respondents believe that the justice system is imperfect and could end up executing the wrong person.” Opinion Front also states that “A study published in the 'Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology' revealed that 88 percent of American criminologists believed that it was not an effective crime deterrent.” For this reason, the death penalty is ineffective in curbing crime rates as the real criminals may end up scot free in case a wrongful conviction is made by the justice system. Therefore, the death penalty should be abolished in all the states and alternative approaches should be adopted.

In addition, there are other more effective approaches such as life imprisonment without the possibility of parole that are more likely to dissuade people from committing crimes. Other programs include neighborhood crime prevention programs, gun control, as well as a focused approach to particular types of crimes. This is because “Many homicides result from botched robberies. Good police work might make someone who is meditating murder hesitate, but just as importantly, it can discourage the kinds of criminal behaviors that become fatal when things go wrong” (Ehrenfreund). The adoption of such programs would make the societies to be much safer and reduce the rates of crime.

In conclusion, the death penalty is not an effective way of preventing crimes and it should never be utilized in punishing criminals. This is because there is no proof that show that the death penalty is effective in preventing crimes. These arguments demonstrate that the death penalty is not a requisite for justice and it should never be used in fighting crime. The U.S. government should establish a more reformatory prison system that will rehabilitate criminals while at the same time creating safer communities.

Works Cited

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