

The Collegiate
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Individualized Society

Yes, we are a sick society. We live in an age full of questions. Questions to which everyone seems to have an answer but none of the answers solve the problems.

In last week's editorial, "Canada is for Cowards" there was a list of beliefs of a "sick" American. And most assuredly these ideals were sick. That is exactly how the article was to be read — that all the opinions stated were the very qualities that would weaken and were weakening the American society. However, some persons could not accept this satirical writing.

Somewhere in grade school we learned to read and then somewhere in our late life we learned to read between the lines. It is in this faction of the American people and the individual that misunderstandings arise.

Misunderstandings between individuals and different groups will continue to arise without any instillation of trust. It is true, especially in the Black and White situation, that many of the White American society have done little to instill trust in the Blacks. However, it is necessary that an effort to understand each other be made.

In an article such as "Canada is for Cowards" the statements may sound condemning and offensive to certain groups, but read in context the article is condemning the very opinions it states.

This view must be accepted for just that without any added individual feelings. Here is where the problems of trust arise. As editor I published the article with the trust in the students that they would read it as it was intended and not think there was a hidden attacking point. Evidently not. A feeling of trust is missing in the American society.

But how do we establish this trust? What must we do? And what part of ourselves must we give? This does not pertain to one group giving to each other.

As long as objectives, goals, and rights are rough on a group basis that is how they will be won (if they are won) — on a group basis. There it is — we will still be a grouped society.

And why do we not have a society made of individuals. The reasons are numerous — social, historical, and individual — and we all have come in contact with them at one time or another. But shouldn't an "individual society" be the goal of all Americans. The quote "All men are created equal" stands quite firmly on this ideal. And this quote did not originate with the writing of the US Constitution but with the origin of man for "All men are created in the image and likeness of God." No one can obtain any more equality than that.

Why have all these ideas flowed from the controversy of one editorial? That controversy brought to the surface many of the feelings that I have held for a long time. I did not think it was a simple matter of explaining the satire and I definitely did not think an apology was needed. The reasons for the controversy go much deeper than a few typewritten lines.

I was asked why something as controversial as that editorial ever appeared in the paper. It covered many topics with which we as students and young Americans should be concerned.

Is it not true, as can be seen through history, that things only get started because of controversy? But the way they are settled is due to the way the controversy is handled.

Mary Kay McKown

Punishment Is Capital

I am against capital punishment on the grounds of five major points, which I will later name and discuss. First let me put a few questions in your mind to make you think a little. Is the death penalty effective? If not, shouldn't we find a better and more effective way of handling these cases? If you were sentenced to death and were innocent what would you think of Capital Punishment? Does Capital Punishment violate God's word? These are some questions that you think about and base your opinion on this question: Should Capital Punishment be re-established, nationwide? Those of us who oppose the death penalty do not raise this argument to condemn our courts or our judiciary, but only to underline the fallibility of human judgement and human procedures and we also oppose Capital Punishment for the guilty.

POINT 1:

The death penalty doesn't cut down on murders, but in some states where it is effective the murders are more numerous. Executive Director of Citizens Against Legalized Murder, Inc., Douglas B. Lyons says, "...in 1970 the States which had the three highest murder rates ... were all States which have use of the death penalty." The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Ad-

ministration of justice after a study on the subject made this statement: "Far from deterring murder, the continued existence of the death penalty lulls us into the mistaken belief that we are actually doing something about murder. In fact we are doing virtually nothing about it. We have been killing murderers for eons — but the murders continue. The time has come for us to realize that we cannot stop killing with more killing."

POINT 2:

The death penalty also takes longer in the courtrooms and clogs up the courts when they could be used for other types of cases which are more important to the most people and which effect the community, state, and even the nation. Douglas B. Lyons also stated that "Another major effect ... of capital punishment ... is the clogging of the courts ..." and then Justice Jackson backed this statement with a reason why this could be so when he said, "When the penalty is death, we, like State court judges, are tempted to strain the evidence and even, in close cases, the law in order to give a doubtfully condemned man another chance."

POINT 3:

Prejudice against race, sex, riches or other classes of status form to prove that capital punishment is not a good form of punishment and is not fair. Joseph E. Lowery, Board Chairman of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference says, "...As of April 1972, 310 of the 581 condemned people in our country, or 53.4 per cent, were black." He was also quoted as saying, "From 1944-58, 20.2 per cent of the whites condemned had their sentences commuted, while only 11.6 per cent of the black condemned were so fortunate." Not only is color of skin a factor, but there are other factors involved as well. I quote the book entitled "The Death Penalty in America" as stating, "Whether a man died for his offense depended not on the gravity of his crime, not on the number of such crimes or the number of his victims, not on his present or prospective danger to society, but on such adventitious factors as the jurisdiction in which the crime was committed, the color of his skin; his financial position; whether he male or female (we seldom execute females), and indeed oftentimes on what were the character and characteristics of his victim." This quote explains that if you have position and the right color skin or right sex and you know important people and have inside contacts or influence, you can commit any crime you wish and get away with it, whether it

is a traffic violation or murder. I quote the previous book mentioned "It may be exceedingly difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven but case after case bears witness that it is virtually impossible for him to enter the execution chamber." This too, shows that we are prejudice against others.

POINT 4:

We convict innocents along with the criminals, it is not an effective court system. Out of all of the Court cases each year, if we convict and execute one innocent person, our system has a huge fallacy in it and needs corrections. I quote the same book, "We cannot however close our minds or our hearts to the greater tragedy, the more monstrous injustice, the ineradicable scheme involved when the legal processes of the state, knowingly or unknowingly, have been used to take the life of an innocent man." The truth that we cannot ignore is that we have been executing innocents since we began the process and we must change it as soon as we can and I think the time is now. I give you two examples of the fallacy of the punishment. Socrates and Jesus Christ were both executed and in each case, we were sure at the time that it was the right thing to do.

POINT 5:

If we re-establish Capital Punishment, we will be going against the word of God and will be disobeying his law, which this country is supposed to be following. As the Pledge of Allegiance says "One Nation, under God ..." This is supposed to be a country that follows Jesus Christ. As the Bible says in Mark 11:25 and 26, "And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father, who is in heaven, forgive your trespasses." The Bible also says "thou shalt not kill." This does not say we may kill for punishment or vengeance, for it also says, "vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

On the basis of these five points I hope that you will see that re-establishing Capital Punishment would be a grave mistake by this nation. It goes against God's word, it puts innocent people in danger, and most of all it does not accomplish what we want it to, it does not cut down on murders but it makes them more numerous. I ask that you will agree with me on my stand and will also stand against re-establishing capital punishment nationwide.

ALLAN RICHESON

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor,

"Yes, this is a truly sick society." It is not sick however, because people won't stand up for their beliefs but because people stand up for beliefs not rooted in truth or chained to what is just and fair.

Blacks will never understand or attain "their place in society" because they don't have one. Cross-burning in every yard will not solve the race problem. The burning of antiquated, ludicrous and mythical race superiority dogmas will.

It is time for Americans, who have something to say, to stand and speak to America. Not to Black of White America, but America.

It is also time for people, who are standing and talking but yet not saying anything to sit down and listen.

Alfred Sutton

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