

Death Penalty in Japan

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In recent years, there are many countries that have abolished the death penalty because it has a lot of problems. The movement for abolition of the death penalty is growing rapidly (Masm, 2006). Surprisingly, however, the death penalty exists as a legal punishment in Japan still now. I think Japan should abolish the death penalty like many other countries.

There are a lot of problems about the death penalty. In particular, the largest problem is the human rights of the condemned criminals. If one person commits a cruel murder, do we have the right to put the murderer to death? I think we cannot do such a thing. No matter which cruel crimes he has committed, we absolutely cannot have the person make up for taking someone's life. To put a murderer to death is no different than the murderer killing a person (Shikei sonhai mondai, 2006).

In addition, it is questionable whether the death penalty is effective in deterring crime or not. A deterrent effect on crime by the use of the death penalty has not been proven yet. In fact, in one country that abolished the death penalty, the number of offenders didn't increase when they abolished the death penalty (Shikei Haishi, 2005). There, we cannot hope for a deterrent effect by the death penalty.

In addition, the death penalty runs the risk of false accusation. Since 1973 in the United States, for example, 124 people waiting on death row have been released following evidence that negated their respective death sentences (Innocence, 2007). If an innocent person were arrested instead of the criminal and then sentenced to death, what in the world would that person do afterward? The life of a human is irreplaceable, and once a human dies, we cannot restore life. If we put an innocent person to death by mistake, like those 124 people in the United States, we would have done an irrevocable thing.

Some people say that the death penalty is appropriate to atone for murder. However, it is wrong. The notion that one can atone for his or her sins by giving up his or her life is very stupid. There are many ways of making up for one's crimes, for example, by devoting years of service to some organization. A more proper way is to find ways to make the murderer feel remorse for the murder while alive.

Japan should abolish the death penalty without delay. There are few countries among advanced countries that still have the death penalty. It is a blatant violation of the human rights of the accused, and it runs the unforgivable risk of false accusation. The deterrent effect that was expected from the death penalty has not been shown to exist at present. It can never satisfactorily atone for crimes committed. For these reasons, I hope the death penalty will vanish from Japan and Japan will become a rich country on the spiritual side.

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