

Speaking of the courts as giving punishment, I must say no human being is able to assess punishment properly. Only God can do that. One would have to take into account not only results but motives and general attitudes and pre-existing causes and this people are not properly able to do. Yet all of these are taken into account to some extent but usually not properly. There is a great difference in sentences given in different parts of the country, or even in the same part for the same crime. Relatively light offences are sometimes punished with heavy sentences and far more often grievous crimes escape with practically no punishment. The purpose of the courts is not to give fair punishment. That human beings cannot do. They are unable to assess it properly.

It is often said that the purpose of punishment is the rehabilitation of the criminal. Yet all agree that our system of justice rarely results in this. It is stated that most of the people in our prisons today will someday be walking the streets, and there == very few will say that many of them will have been "rehabilitated."

It seems to me that a society has a right to seek the best good of all its members and that freedom from fear of injury or death is a reasonable privilege to which every individual is entitled. The question of whether one individual who will inevitably die anyway is allowed to live a few years longer or his life cut short is far less important than the question of whether a thousand others are able to walk the streets in safety. If 98% of the people desire to live a peaceful lives without interfering with one another and 5% desire to rob and injure and kill for their own pleasure, the 95% have a right to remove the 5% from their midst. This could be done in one of three