

On Wings of Hope



Volume 26 Issue 1

Jan. - Mar. 2022

Five
Justice
People

ALL JUDGMENT IS RELATIVE



We were delighted recently to read that a motion filed in Mobile alleged that the discretion Alabama District Attorneys have to decide which defendants they seek the death penalty against is arbitrary. Why you ask? Because "each elected prosecutor has her own views on capital punishment and her own implicit and explicit biases, each prosecutor enforces the death penalty using different criteria, resulting in impermissibly arbitrary application of the death penalty". As we know from experience arbitrariness does not stop at the initial phase but makes its way all the way up to the Supreme Court. If you doubt that my question is why then does it matter to us which President appoints Justices or why are there seldom unanimous rulings?

If this can be said about the highest court in the land, I hear you asking, where does this judgment being relative stop? After all passing judgment is part of our daily life. We need it to decide what step to take next and we need to pass judgment in order to survive. Of course we do and most of us have no difficulty admitting that.

So where is the problem? The problem comes when we refuse to admit that our judgment of others and situations is at best relative because of our own all too often not acknowledged biases. Naturally to have to acknowledge bias is an uncomfortable feeling because if there is one thing we seek it is certainty or what some might call a hotline to God. Unfortunately looking back over history this is not available and no doubt future generations will call us unenlightened, yes, us too who knew it all!

What can we do, you ask? Well, as charity begins at home acknowledging that our judgments of others are at best relative is a good place to start. However let's not stop there but let us get the word out to our biased, always relative, "so called" (yes, my bias at work) justice system that it needs to start acknowledging that it cannot be absolute because it is administered by humans. As this is undeniable how dare these humans pass judgments dealing with life and death?

Esther



Hello Everyone,

**PROJECT HOPE TO ABOLISH
THE DEATH PENALTY (phadp)**
501 (C) (3) non-profit.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Working together with friends, supporters and other advocates to educate the public and bring about the abolition of Capital Punishment in Alabama.

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**THIS NEWSLETTER WAS WRITTEN,
TYPED AND FORMATTED ON DEATH
ROW AT HOLMAN PRISON**

So much has transpired in such a short span of this very young year, and I cannot cover it all in an even shorter period of time, nor in such a small space. So, if I leave something, someone or an organization out, please know that if you went unmentioned, it's not intentional, and whatever you have done, or plan to do is appreciated from the heart.

Now, sad news... Our friend and brother Matthew Reeves (Lil Reeves) was executed by the state of Alabama on Jan. 27th, 2022. After receiving a stay from a lower federal court, and having that stay confirmed by the 11th Circuit, we were all hopeful that the stay would remain in place, even though we all knew the state would appeal up to the U.S. Supreme Court. A court that has said and shown throughout the years that when the 11th Circuit upholds a stay, they rarely, if ever, touched it. Now, SCOTUS is -- conservative strong, a wild card, and running roughshod over the U.S. Constitution in the brazen fashion of such outlaws as Billy the Kid, and John Gotti. Implementing justice(?) based upon their beliefs and their own narratives. No different than those lynch mobs, who ran around hanging people of color for looking at someone or just speaking to someone of non-color. They thought they were meting out justice also, going by their own narratives, but the atrocities they perpetuated on fellow human beings, as well as those of the conservative majority of SCOTUS continue to perpetuate have nothing to do with justice, nor with the U.S. Constitution.

Rest in Peace, Lil' Reeves!

We would like to thank WorthRises, P.A.G.E., and all the church communities in Tennessee who came together to take a stand against FDR safety. Your hard work, diligence, and persistence paid off.

(Continued...)

Overall, it shows what can be accomplished when like minded people come together, stand together, and fight together. Separately we are strong, but together, we are an unstoppable force.

There is more work to be done, this year is still young, but we know together we will accomplish more great things together.

Don't just let "Be The Other Voice" be a statement, or a slogan, let it be a movement!

In Solidarity,

Anthony Boyd
Chairman, PHADP



The Inalienable Right to Life

Where in the constitution does it say you forfeit any right to life when convicted of a capital crime? I ask this question because the Kansas Supreme Court on January 21, 2022 held that the right to life **is** guaranteed in section 1 of the Kansas Constitution's Bill of Rights "is not absolute or nonforfeitable!"

Life is a gift from God, It's not a privilege given by man to say who shall live and who shall have it taken away. This means that life is an "inalienable right" and nowhere in the United States Constitution does it say, "the right to life is forfeitable." As a matter of fact to take someone's life away from them is a criminal offense. So what makes it right for evil-minded politicians, lawmakers, or judges to take someone's life? We are in a world where mankind has hidden agendas. people are biased, racist, and revenge seekers. Therefore, no one should decide whether someone shall live or die. Not even those who have the power in the U.S. Supreme Court. "Life" is an inalienable right and for those of you that don't know, the word inalienable means incapable of being alienated. This is an assurance or a guarantee that only we will all enjoy life to the fullest and that any person who shall take it away shall face criminal charges, not capital punishment where taking life is a nonpunishable offense in itself for the states.

So, I close by saying, "No man should have all that power!" Stop capital punishment and save a life. After all, it was given by God, so if it's taken, it should be taken by God.

Mario Woodward

ALABAMA NEWS

First Quarter - 2022

* Matthew Reeves was pronounced dead at 9:24 pm following a lethal injection in the execution chamber at Holman on Jan. 27, 2022. A federal court judge had granted Mr. Reeves an injunction barring the state from executing him by any method other than nitrogen hypoxia, however, with no reason given, the U.S. Supreme Court lifted the injunction allowing his execution to proceed. Our hearts and prayers are with his family, and we are grateful for all who supported him personally. May he rest in peace.

* William Kuenzel passed away on Feb. 19, 2022 after a very long battle with cancer. Mr. Kuenzel's innocence garnered national attention, but despite public awareness, he remained incarcerated until his death. May he rest in peace.

* One of the companies contracted by the state to assist in creating a nitrogen hypoxia execution protocol has withdrawn after petitions and letters from activists and religious leaders urged them to stop participating in state sanctioned killing.

* Sherman Collins has been elected as Sgt. at Arms and Darryl Turner is our new Assistant Coordinator. Two well qualified men for two very important positions.

* Cory Maples had his death sentence overturned in federal district court due to ineffective assistance of counsel during the penalty phase of his trial.

* Brett Yeiter, who was convicted and sentenced in Escambia Co. has been granted a new trial by the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals.

* Marcus Williams was elected to the sub-board, we look forward to utilizing his talents.

* Executive Director Esther Brown continues to be active on our behalf on the outside, representing us via Zoom at the Alabama C.U.R.E. meeting, Alabama Arise Legislative day, and the NAACP Quarterly meeting in her role as Death Penalty Moratorium Chair.



Real True Leadership

While sitting and pondering; wondering about the true essence of leadership and what it takes to lead I had to take heed to the fact that, leadership is a characteristic trait some are born with. Some thrive in their blessing. Some bow to the pressure and strain on their brain, to only cower from responsibilities given to them from the Most High. Leadership comes with a standard of not asking others to do something you yourself would not do. Leadership comes with a standard of making the best decision possible for all involved, and not just the ones who have thrown their weight, finances, and support behind you. Everyone that wants to lead is not a leader. Everyone that tries to lead is not worthy of the loyalty, support, and dedication bestowed. Everyone wants to lead, but no one wants to make the tough decisions or sacrifices when it comes to that. Leaders of the free world?! (ha,ha,ha) I do not like, nor condone war, as it's not about the people, the real people. War is about commodities, and egos. However, if you want a clear and convincing view at leadership look to the current war between Russia and the Ukraine. Again I say, I do not like, nor condone war, but the very fact that Ukraine's president has taken up arms and is fighting alongside his people is a testament to a true characteristic of leadership. Do you know (honestly) any leader on this side of the ocean that would do that on your behalf? Dr. Martin Luther King made the revelation, "I may not get there with you," and knowing that, he still chose to make the trip! Leaders lead by example, not just by directives. Please, take heed to the need of who you choose to lead!

In Solidarity

Anthony Boyd

*Actions
speak
louder
than
words*



Securus Mobile App

Now that we have tablets, direct contact with us has become easier. If you would like to contact either the Chairman, or Vice-Chairman, please get the Securus Mobile App, setup an account, and enter our information to begin messaging us. We look forward to working directly with you.

*Five
Justice
People*

In Solidarity

Chairman: Anthony Boyd Z-578
Vice-Chairman: Bart Johnson Z-778

Lynching & The Death Penalty

From reconstruction, to Jim Crow, and now mass incarceration the death penalty has taken the place of lynching. I've heard it said many times, but have seen nothing done about the criminal justice system working exactly as it was designed to do, discriminate and disenfranchise black and brown citizens and those less fortunate. The federal government has introduced a bill to make lynching a federal hate crime, how ironic? All of a sudden... The nation's leaders now feel like lynching is a crime, so let me ask this, was it legal before this? The government gang (Police) are still in the business of lynching, and no real reprimand is handed down. So now I put to you, the death penalty is now the new lynching method. Look at it as you may, but it is what it is! In the land of immigrants, this government is in complete contrast to what it expects of other democracies around the world. A government that kills its own citizens is third worldly, what do you think?

N.O.



M.D.K.



Is it possible that we are looking at it all wrong? What am I talking about, what are we looking at all wrong? Abolishing the death penalty, executions. The death statute of Alabama and the senseless, needless executions.... Is it possible that we should embrace this archaic and barbaric way of punishing our American citizens instead of fighting for its abolishment?

Let us come together and embrace it!! Better....Let us bring back public executions!! No more cloak and dagger, no more clandestine executions after dark. Set it up on the courthouse front lawn, advertise on national television. Let all of America bear witness, let all the world nations view the executions....live!!

After the trial, where a defendant is forced to prove ones innocence using unqualified and inexperienced lawyers who are without benefit of the funds which the state enjoys financing an antiquated capital sentencing scheme. When an American citizen is to be judged guilty by twelve jurors and three elected politicians (judge, prosecutor and sheriff) using supposition, conjecture and hearsay/circumstantial evidence. After the guilty verdict, march the convicted out the courthouse front door and up the gallows steps then hang 'em. Strap 'em in the chair and put the voltage to 'em. Wait!! Better still just gas 'em or strap 'em down and plunge the needles in. What about using a spear with a hook on the shaft, just pierce the side below the ribs, rotate the hook to snag on the intestines extracting while conscious.

Hmmm, does'nt sound humane, does it? And it's safe to say that crime will not stop or be deterred by any method of punishment employed by Alabama. We, us, humans make mistakes. Killing is not humane, the incarcerated and non-incarcerated are humane.... Let's come together and abolish the death statute in Alabama and life without parole. Murder,Death,Kill.....

The Evolution of Executions

For centuries, man has placed themselves in the position of God, we have allowed ourselves to be the Judge and punisher of crime. God said that vengeance is His. Only the God who is completely just can judge and make right all the wrongs committed. So to all of those who over time have allowed themselves to pass deadly judgement, hopefully they were just.

The execution of crime has evolved over time with each version deemed better and more humane than the one proceeding it. The guillotine comes to mind as one of the earliest forms of execution, what is more humane than to see a person's head chopped off as the body of the person flails about. Then the rope comes to mind, hanging wasn't just a legal form of execution, it was a way to terrorize communities of color to promote the ideals of White Supremacy. What's more humane than to see a person's neck snapped under their own weight and their feet dangling as life leaves their bodies.

The gruesomeness of public execution pushed the process inside a chamber known in most states as death chambers. The electric chair was the primary form of execution for years. The condemned was strapped to a wooden chair as electrodes were attached to their bodies and a hood was placed over their heads to veil the torture that took place in the eyes and face as the current flowed through their bodies. I haven't ever smelled burnt human flesh, I imagine it's horrible. What's more humane than watching and smelling a person being fried in the name of justice.

The evolution of executions allowed more secrecy as lethal injection became the primary form of execution. The condemned is given a paralytic drug before the process begins, often acting as a covering to the extreme pain and anguish the person is experiencing. It's only after a person is given an autopsy that it is revealed that the person went through trauma. Their lungs often filled with a frothy liquid that is found in drowning victims. So how is it humane that states are still killing people in this fashion, knowing that the individual is being tortured while trapped inside of their own bodies not able to make a sound.

The execution continues to evolve, each evolution brings about more secrecy and more cover-up. We as people want to accept the idea that if the execution looks like a surgical procedure, then it's impossible that it's painful. That's the lie the states have been telling for years. As man continues to find more humane ways to act as God and pass judgement on people and killing them. It's apparent by the facts that the wrong we're doing we don't want the public to see or hear about it because that's why the veil is always closed at the assumption of death and never at the pronouncement of death. We can, and must do better before the evolution of the execution takes us to a place we can't return from.

Jeffery Lee
Sec/Treasurer, Phadp
Z-674 / L-12

A Christian Perspective

Produced By

Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty

Volume 26 Issue 1

Jan. - Mar. 2022



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A Christian Perspective is
Published by Project Hope
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Greetings Friends and Family,

One of the slogans you hear from us and other death penalty abolitionists is "Don't Kill In My Name!" We say this because we live in a democracy, where our government is "of the people, for the people, and by the people" and we feel that when our government acts, it is acting on our behalf. But the reality is, the government is acting on behalf of the majority, often a slim majority. On the issue of the death penalty, the majority of lives are not touched by it. Not directly anyway, but we can begin to change that. Those of us (and you) who are impacted can share your experience, or the experience of one whose life touches yours, with the uninitiated. Shedding light on a broken system that most folks are more than happy to remain in the dark about. Convincing others that we should get rid of the death penalty because it is expensive, ineffective, racist, error prone, and unjust is only difficult when you think you have to convince everyone at once. We're really not that far from a tipping point in this country, so I encourage all of you to continue sharing how the death penalty has impacted you and to let those who represent you in government know that you don't support capital punishment with your calls, letters, and most importantly, with your vote!

Yours In Christ

Bart Johnson
Vice-Chairman, PHADP

p.s. for individuals and organizations looking to collaborate with us, please check out the information on page 8 concerning emessaging on our tablets.



"Its nothing personal"

I imagine that we all have heard the phrase, "its nothing personal", just business or my job. When in fact it is personal! Especially when you or I are involved in it.

We are here on earth, no matter what continent, or what stage in life to learn and discover something about yourself, our neighbor and our creator. No! I'm not talking about your parents smile! But the creator of the heavens, the earth and seas with all that were created in them.

We are asked, warned, even commanded to love our neighbor as ourself. Well I have discovered that if a person does'nt love or care about thenself, they definitely are not capable of loving someone else.

You can't do or give something that you don't possess, or have even experienced yourself. We don't have a problem participating in romantic love, or loving an idea, or loving pleasures. It's in those times of disappointment, frustration, confusion, pain, hurts, even suffering that our creator wants to meet us, and help us to know and grow in Him. He wants us to know Him as "Jehovah-Shammah" which means that the Lord is there or present.

Do you need Him? He is there. you can't see Him, yet He is the light you see by. You can't hear Him, yet He is the power at work in your hands. He is at work, though you do not understand His ways. He is at work, though you do not recognize His works. He is not strange visions near mysteries.

Only in absolute stillness, beyond self, can you know Him as He is and then but as a feeling and a faith. Yet He hears and answers when you need Him, He is there. Even if you deny Him, He is there. Even when you feel most alone, He is there. Even in your fears, He is there, even in your pain, He is there.

He is there when you pray and when you don't pray. He is in you and you are in Him. Only in our minds can we feel seperate from Him, empty your heart of empty fears. When you get yourself out of the way, He is there. You can, of yourself do nothing, but He can do all and He is in all.

Though you may not see the good, good is there for He is there. He is there because He has to be, because He is. Only in Him does the world have meaning, only out of Him does the world take form, only because of Him does the world go forward.

He is the law on which the movement of the stars and the growth of living cells are founded. He is the love that is the law's fulfilling, He is assurance, He is peace, He is oneness, HE is the law that you can live by, He is the love that you can cling to. He is.

Though we fail to find Him, He does not fail us, though our faith in Him is unsure, His faith in us never wavers, because He knows us and because He loves us.

May you be encouraged by these words of hope! May His love, grace, and spirit continue to comfort, teach and guide you each step of the way of each new day. Amen.

With much love & appreciation for you all!

Earl J McGahee Z-466

L-24

ENVY

If you were to describe your desire that someone lose his blessing as Envy, then your definition will be accurate. Envy is a severe disease of the heart that some scholars hold to be the root of all diseases, while others opine that the parent disease goes back to covetousness.

Regardless of where Envy ranks in the hierarchy of diseases, most scholars agree that it is the First Manifestation of wrongdoing and the first cause of disobedience against God. While it is believed that envy can bring about harm to the one envied, ultimately it is the envier who is harmed the most. The evil eye is generally related to envy. Take the case of the very first murder that occurred on the face of the earth, when Cain out of envy killed his own brother.

Imam Mawlud explains that envy is exhibited when one desires that another person lose a blessing he or she has. This loss could be anything big or small—a house, car, job, etc. For example, an envious person may become resentful that a co-worker was promoted to the point that he wishes that the person lose the position or that a person was wrongfully convicted and got sentenced to death or years later got exonerated because the conviction came about through racism which is deeply rooted in envy.

One's passion is like the wind, in that it comes, stirs up emotion, and then dies down. One cannot really see it, only its effect. Criticism should be done with the purpose of being constructive and not destructive. An arrogant man who sees someone advancing ahead of him will feel that this person is not worthy of such advancement. There are different forms of envy, how can envy be remedied? In other words, what is the remedy to such a deadly disease that resides in our hearts?

Craig Newton

-Healing-

You may think,
we're on the brink,
of throwing in,
the kitchen sink,
because this situation
stinks,
wearing breast cancer,
pink,
hoping to create a link,
so we can sit down,
and have a drink,
to discuss saving lives,
so i'm pushing this ink,
it's just a thought,
from lesson's learned,
and battles we've fought,
we can do a lot of healing,
if together we taught,
the healing power of love,
and in that web get caught,
it's free nothing bought,
1 step 2 love!

Tony Barksdale

Create
Justice
Not
People

Trust
in the
Lord
WITH ALL
your
Heart

My Thoughts

I can't believe, well actually I'm seeing, the humanity of Mankind, I mean this is the very reason my Savior Jesus the Christ died for us and stopped the Eye for An Eye law!

Yet we beings who claim to be higher beings have yet to find a better method of deterrance and rehabilitation because it's easier and poltically effective to practice revenge/ Eye for An Eye.

We have some judges who will overstep their bounds and overrule another court to fulfill a political quota that in all honesty should be frowned upon, considering they are playing God or at the very least, "Supreme Being" for a vote!

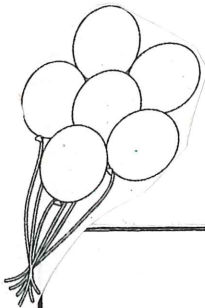
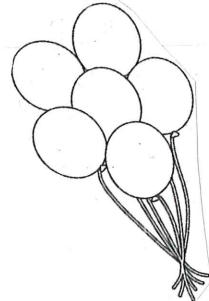
Now 2 families are victims of a cycle that could've been broken, instead they use us as pawns as votes so, what type of people are we? And we wonder why there is so much death in this suppose to be "the standard setting country" instead we exhibit to our nation and the world that we are still a primitive species!! I guess because it's not them or their well-off sons and daughters, "Why care?"

What's really amazing is that it's me and my brothers and sisters on the row across the land that are called monsters and the worst of the worst!!

My readers, WE have to be the fight in this darkness and continue using our voices in their many forms! Thank you for being a voice for us!

Rest in peace Matthew Reeves, Love you Lil Bruh...I

Tony Barksdale



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Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty is an interfaith 501 C 3 organization whose mission is to educate and mobilize communities to act to abolish the death penalty in Alabama. PHADP relies on YOU for support. Suggested donations: \$25/individual, \$40/household, and \$100/congregation, or whatever amount is affordable. Checks should be made out to "PHADP" and sent to the above address. Donations may also be made on line by going to our website and clicking on "donate" on the right hand top corner of the front page.

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It's An Act

Can't comprehend completely
This has become a problem, lethally
Run, shoot baskets, black, make millions
Hiding the facts could take eons
Test scores show mental capacity
No matter no mercy
Adding and subtracting is a negative factor
Reading and writing is another X-factor
Upon further inspection
Ignored facts, injection
On level below the norm
Doesn't matter, send them to the farm
Birth to death
Nothing in between to help with mental health
No matter how unable
Strap them to the table
Major shortcomings listed as laziness
Your eyes closed to this haziness
Still can't comprehend how or why
Deny Deny Deny Deny
No matter how right, wrong
Weak minds ignored, say they strong
Only because one can participate
Ignoring the fact the same one can't elaborate
Rub, shoot, block, read, write, add, and subtract
Mental illness is not real, it's an act...

Marcus Williams



Create
Justice
People

The United States has changed over the decades, but some things are still the same. They just cover it in a different way. Speaking on "lynching," that was a normal thing in the southern states that goes back for centuries, but now they cover that in the name of state executions. Most states have had the same form of executions on the books, but the southern states seem to get the most joy from them. Like they are in competition to see who can kill the most in the name of justice.

They don't care who they kill/murder in the name of the state they are in. Still it seems like the black men are still the focus of this with some white men thrown in there to balance things out. The courts attempt to do this by sending both to death row.

Let's not get it twisted, lynching back in the day wasn't profitable like the state issued executions are today. From the courtroom all the way to the lawyers on the appeals that is adding to the situation, and don't get one that really doesn't know what they are doing in one of these southern states. They will find out real quick that the "Good ole boy" system is still in effect.

This is the 21st century and most states/people are changing their ways, and how they're feelings about these killings. I think the mindset of the nation had started to move decades ago and now we are seeing the hard work paying off, but we have to keep pressing on.

Daryl Turner

Beach No Shore

Collecting thoughts on all issues at hand
Mind full of ideas, solutions on how to take a stand
Faced with death daily
Yet living with dreams and realities that have come lately
Seeing the disappearance of people known to you
Despair sets, drastic mental exercises to fight this truth
Depression, no way to decompress
Images flash, infusion of mistrust, no harness
Wild thoughts raging, running
Separate from others, triggers pulled, gunning
Yet no gun used, still shots fired
The mind collapses, wired
Falling off a cliff, drowning, no water, mountain
It's raining doubts from a fountain
Change from thoughts collected
To a mind irritated and conflicted
Sand on a beach with no shore
Head on straight no more
Lost in the illusion of what one wants to be real
Realization never occurred, the fakeness and zeal
All the issues at hand can't be dealt with in this life
Ideas won't see fruition today or tonight
A bad dream this reality
Nothing this dredfull can be real, but in actuality
Born not knowing what life has in store
Beach with sand and no shore
Explain That.....

Marcus Williams

Death by fault of the state

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 42 U.S.C. 12101, has been the rule of law when it comes to the accomodation of Americans with Disabilities since the early 90's. The state of Alabamaknew this, but fail to provide the necessary accommodation for our dear brother Matthew Rees back in June of 2018, when death-row inmates were handed a piece of paper bt another inmate and told, "you can sign it if you want to or not, it's about the change in the execution method."

With no lawful guidance from anyone, our dear brother Matthew did'nt and could not and was not able to comprehend the gravity of not signing this legal document!!

The state of Alabama knew of our dear brother Matthew Reeves mental/intellectual disability, but because our dear brother Matthew Reeves did'nt meet the personal standards of those who sought his life and took his life, the state of Alabama killed him, because of a law that they broke. How can the state of Alabama get away with breaking all laws to kill, no, Murder, Murder, Murder?

What message did our dear brother Matthew Reeves death send to the other brother's on death-row who are similarly situated to Matthew Reeves?

Will they die because they were not able to commprehend a legal document to which they had no legal authorized assistance (required) by law to help them with understanding before making an unconcious, fatal decision? Where's the integrity of the judicial system? Two courts found that our dear brother Matthew Reeves rights to have been violated, one court found that it did'nt matter....

Randy "The Great" Lewis



Land of Immigrants

Killing the person who allegedly killed someone won't bring that someone back, and it will never bring closure--it will only rehash memories and bring about your true feelings; Revenge!

After decades in prison, to kill a person who had an insane moment at the time of a crime is not justice, it's revenge in the name of victim's families.

To exact the ultimate punishment that law allows, shouldn't it be prosecuted with no doubt and to the letter of the law? Capital murder trials should not last 1 day, 2 days, 3 days and a person be found guilty and the prosecution seeks death as the punishment! In the land if immigrants, rules that are man made by imperfect humans can never be tested to punish its citizens to the ultimate punishment. You can't undo that mistake if you kill an innocent person. You can't believe that justice was had in 3 days of trial for a person's life. Civil trials last longer! Guilty until proven innocent, a more fitting slogan for the land of immigrants' unjust system.

N.O.