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there was a flurry of death sentences imposed, then no more. This is from the New York Times. "The komitehs of revolutionary justice are working round the clock in Iran, executing the Shah's ministers and agents for crimes of state and violations of divine law. To put it more simply, the new rulers are killing off their predecessors, avenging the uses and abuses of power in the past and trying to preserve their own power in the present. It is not, alas, an uncommon phenomenon. After a momentary hesitation to rearrange their trial procedures, the Iranians shot former Prime Minister Hoveida for sowing corruption on earth. After a similar delay to weigh the protests from abroad, the Pakistanis hung former Prime Minister Bhutto for plotting political murder. It may be mere sanctimony for Americans, the executioners of Nazi war criminals, to recoil from such retribution elsewhere, but in reflecting on our past as well as on the Middle East today, we do recoil from official murder and we find ourselves driven to the conclusion that murder will never cease to be an instrument of politics until the execution even of proved murderers is generally understood as wrong. It is a wonder that societies have not long since reached this conclusion, and for the most practical reasons. As the political offspring of Stalin learned in our own time, those who rule by murder can only be deposed by murder. A government that punish political crime by execution inevitably drives its opponents to killings. Indeed, it must assume that they will kill even before they actually do and so violence becomes the very language of dispute. Nikita Khrushchev set out twenty years ago to liberate the Soviet Communist Party from such terror. He knew that he had to begin in his own Kremlin circle to substitute exile, ostracism and imprisonment for the penalty of death that had accompanied political defeat. He died a symbol of more civilized politics deposed but in bed." And I hope you will listen particularly to these last three paragraphs. "Perhaps in theory some crimes can be distinguished from others in ways that seem to justify the death penalty. The Nuremberg trials raise a poignant aspect of the problem. The Russians still execute egregious profiteers. American law has tried to define the murder of kidnapped victims or policemen as different from other slayings but here too there are practical reasons for doubting that any sound purpose is served. Execution by government does not demonstrably deter crime but it does degrade the meaning of life and of government. An eye for an eye sounds just. It is a principle found in both religious and secular legal traditions but governments are imperfect judges of where the chain of injury really begins. Even in the most benign society, government itself injures

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