



1. Attorney Clarence Darrow (center) saved the lives of thrill killers Nathan Leopold, Jr., and Richard Loeb, sons of wealthy Chicagoans.

2. Murderess Barbara Graham, mother of 20-month-old son, died in San Quentin gas chamber after suffering through cat-and-mouse reprieves.

3. Mass-murderer John Christie's testimony once sent his neighbor to the gallows for a crime many now believe Christie himself committed.



Last month Nathan Leopold, Chicago thrill killer of the 1920s, walked out of the Illinois State Penitentiary a free man. He had been paroled after 34 years behind bars. Many people thought he never should have been freed. Still others thought that he and his partner, Richard Loeb, should have received the death penalty for the kidnap-slaying of a 14-year-old boy. Both Leopold and Loeb (who died in prison) came from wealthy families which were able to hire the best legal talent of the day, and it is generally agreed that the brilliant defense tactics of attorney Clarence Darrow saved them from the gallows. Leopold's parole has focused attention again on the controversial question of the death penalty, and this article examines the pros and cons of the issue.

The Fight over Death Row

Does capital punishment prevent crime, or is it barbaric and ineffectual?

by Jack Ryan

A BLOOD-SPLASHED TRAIL of violence ended in the thick woods near North Vernon, Ind., some months ago when the surviving member of a two-man holdup team walked hands-on-head toward a mile-long ring of police.

The meek surrender climaxed a 12-hour manhunt which began when a Michigan state trooper stopped the bandits for speeding. Without warning, they shot him down. In the ensuing pursuit, the gunmen killed officers in Michigan and Indiana and wounded three others who blocked their escape. One of the gunmen also died in the running battles.

Ordinarily, Michigan could be expected to demand extradition of the captured gunman, but not in this case. Michigan has no death penalty, Indiana has. And authorities seemed content to let the killer take his chances with more stringent justice in Indiana.

For people who have long argued for or against capital punishment, the incident had special significance. In the eyes of those who oppose the death penalty, Michigan is a model of "civilized justice." Now "civilized justice" appeared inadequate, and supporters of capital punishment claimed new proof that sometimes society must have the right to exact the supreme penalty.

In the age-old controversy over capital punishment, however, both sides can usually cite (Continued on page 14)