nalties to persons they find guilty of having committed the acts the law forbids.

If the laws prohibiting acts such as murder are morally justified, so is the punishment of those who break the punishment of th

to prevent them from seeking revenge on their own. But above all, punishment is indispensable to make the threats of the law credible and thereby to deter others from violating the law as the punished lawbreaker did. Without actual punishment, legal threats would amount to bluffs; crime would pay. ONE REASON the crime rate is currently rising is that so few offenders are punished—less than one per cent of all crimes lead to prison terms—

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that crime does pay for many people. However, legal threats, if they remain credible by being carried out as promised, deter most people, most of the time, from doing what the law prohibits

hibits.

It is possible that additional people might be deterred by still harsher or more certain punishment, but we prefer tolerating more burglarges to cutting off the hand of a third-time burglar, as is done in some countries such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Libya.

ting off the hand of a third-time burglar, as is done in some countries such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Most of us do not seriously entertain the criminal opportunities offered by life, let alone deliberately weight the threats of the law against the possible advantages of crime. We have absorbed the laws' prohibitions and the moral norms on which they rest through the socialization process that is part of normal growing up. We don't consider committing crimes because the serious of the serious consider committing crimes because they are morally survey.

THE LONG-STANDING and effective threat of punishment contributed to our automatic rejection of criminal poportugities as morally acceptable. "Some men," the English Judge J.F. Stephen when, "the English Judge J.F. Stephen when," the English Judge they regard it with horror is that murker prograd it with horror is that murker as too cheagt to make the murderer pay with his, or that of the murderer pay with his, or that of the murder as too open contains the first program in the contains the program in the contains the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the program in the program in the program in the program is the problem in t

seems high.

LATELY, SOME very persuasive statistical evidence on the deterrent effect of capital punsihment has been

fect of capital putalities uses some presented. For example, University of Chicago For example, University of Chicago Ford. Isaac Ehrlich, after an elabo-rate statistical analysis, concluded that one more execution per year dur-ing the period 1933-39 would have prob-ably deterted an average of seven or eight murders per year.

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It seems that by failing to execute a convicted murder, we may risk failing to prevent other murders have the property of the property of the convertible of the probability of suffering the convertible of the threatened punishment and the probability of suffering it are only two among many influences that deter us from crime The effect of legal threats differs, depending on personality and social situation; thus the perception of the threat and the intensity of the desire of oding what the law proclaims to be wrong will differ from person to person.

university of the ocasic for doing what the law proclaims to be wrong will differ from person to be threat of punishment, while it controls crime, cannot eliminate it. Offenders already guilty of crimes obviously have not been deterred. Among them, the proportion of people who cannot be deterred at all may be high. However, most people are deterrable. Society could find thunction at all directly deter them from Jong while it would be deterred at all may be high. However, most people are deterrable. Society could find thunction at all directly deter them from Jong while it prohibits, whether it be something universally regarded as evil—e.g., murder—or something prohibited to secure some practical good, such as exceeding the speed limit, or practicing medicine without a license. The evidence, statistical and experimental, shows clearly that a higher probability of severe punishment effect of the promotion of the for example, the experiment of note, for example and experiment of note, for example and experimental society of the note of the

The threat of punishment is thus only one of many factors influencing crime rates. But threats can be more easily controlled than, say, family dis-

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integration, which contributes importantly to high crime rates.

Some of the social changes from which improvement had been expected have had no discernible effects on crime rates. Poverty and ignorance often have been blamed for an expected have had no discernible effects of the contribution of the province of the contribution of the province of the contribution of the contribution

has psychiatric care, but the crime rate has visen even more.

ON THE OTHER hand, rates of purishment have decreased.

Between 1960 and 1970, the crime rate (per 100,00 people) rose 144 per cent; the arrest rate did not keep pace—it rose only 31 per cent.

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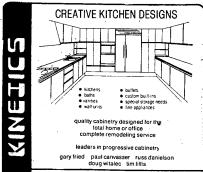
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