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Ce sujet propose les 4 documents suivants :

1. un article du *Guardian Weekly* paru le 30 septembre 2011 ;
2. un article paru dans *The Economist* le 24 septembre 2011 ;
3. un dessin de presse de Clay Bennett publié dans le « *Chattanooga Times Free Press* » du 21 septembre 2011 ;
4. les résultats de sondages d'opinion réalisés aux États-Unis par l'institut Gallup.

L'ordre dans lequel se présentent les documents est aléatoire.

Execution fuels row over death penalty

Opponents say case of Troy Davis is a wake-up call to US politicians

Ed Pilkington Jackson, Georgia

In statistical terms, it may have been just another execution. But, on the morning after the death by lethal injection of Troy Davis, there was no sign that the controversy over the case would be buried with him.

Davis was sent to his death despite a mass of evidence that left his 1991 conviction in doubt, including recantations from seven of the nine key witnesses at his trial for the murder of a police officer.

The execution has provoked an extraordinary outpouring of protest in Georgia, at the supreme court and White House in Washington, and in cities around the world. Relatives of Davis and civil rights leaders across the south vowed to fight on with the campaign to have the death penalty abolished. Richard Dieter, director of the Death Penalty Information Centre, said it was a clear wake-up call to politicians across the US.

"They weren't expecting such

passion from people in opposition to the death penalty," he said. "There's a widely held perception that all Americans are united in favour of executions, but this message came across loud and clear that many people are not happy with it."

Brian Evans of Amnesty, which led the campaign to spare Davis's life, said that there was a groundswell in America of people "who are tired of a justice system that is inhumane and inflexible and allows executions where there is clear doubt about guilt". He predicted the debate would now be conducted with renewed energy.

Martina Correia, Davis's sister, who kept vigil at the prison until the end, said that a movement had been formed that would transcend her brother's death. Sitting in a wheelchair as she battles cancer, she said: "If you can get millions of people to stand up against this, we can end the death penalty."

But so far national politicians have refrained from entering the debate. White House press secretary Jay Carney said: "It is not appropriate for the president of the United States to weigh in on spe-

cific cases like this one, which is a state prosecution."

Rick Perry, the leading contender for the Republican nomination and a strong supporter of the death penalty, has made no public statement on the Davis case. His presence in the Republican race guarantees that the issue of capital punishment will remain in the spotlight in a way it hasn't for years.

Davis was executed for the 1989 murder of Mark MacPhail, who was working off duty as a security guard when he intervened to help a homeless person being attacked. Davis was implicated by another man, Sylvester Coles. But key witnesses have come forward to say their evidence was wrong, and others have testified under oath that Coles was the killer.

Raphael Warnock, pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist church in Atlanta, where Martin Luther King had his ministry, said: "Through this, America is being transformed. This is one of those watershed moments when a human evil and injustice that is part of the norm suddenly becomes questioned and challenged."

The Guardian Weekly 30.09.11

Dying out

Little by little, countries are ditching¹ the death penalty

ON SEPTEMBER 19th Abdul Hamid al-Fakki, a Sudanese, was executed in Saudi Arabia for the crime of “sorcery”. On September 21st Troy Davis, a black man convicted of shooting an off-duty white policeman, was executed in the American state of Georgia. Protests that the evidence against him was flawed proved fruitless.

Despite these cases the death penalty, on the statute books since the days of Hammurabi, is disappearing in much of the world. More than two-thirds of countries have done away with it either in law or in practice. The latest is Benin. In August the west African country committed itself to abolishing capital punishment permanently. The number of countries that carry out judicial killings fell from 41 in 1995 to 23 in 2010, according to Amnesty International, a pressure group. China (chiefly), Iran, North Korea, and Yemen accounted for most of the executions. Votes against the death penalty at the UN General Assembly have passed with big and growing majorities since 2007. Capital punishment has virtually gone in Europe (only Belarus still uses it, most recently in July). This year China whittled down² its list of crimes punishable by death.

Yet for all the apparent momentum, capital punishment remains entrenched in the Middle East and north Africa, and in parts of Asia, notably China. Jacqueline Macalesher of Penal Reform International, a lobby group, thinks the Arab spring could

be a new spur to abolition, though she worries that executing political enemies may prove attractive in the short run.

The other big exception is America, where two-thirds of states still have the death penalty. A leading Republican candidate for the presidency, Rick Perry, is governor of Texas, the state that uses it most. The state has carried out a record 236 executions in his nearly 11 years as governor. Mr Perry says he loses no sleep over it, and many voters feel the same.

But the abolitionist trend seems inexorable. In March Illinois became the fourth state in four years to scrap³ the death penalty. Maryland, Connecticut and California may follow suit. Squeezed state budgets are eroding enthusiasm. The cost of fighting protracted legal battles and maintaining separate facilities for those condemned to death looks increasingly unaffordable when schools and libraries are being closed. California alone has more than 700 people on death row.

Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, a pressure group that espouses abolition, ascribes increasing unhappiness over the death penalty to a long-term growth in sensitivity to human rights. A growing number mind that the death penalty in America falls disproportionately on blacks and poor people. The chance that innocent folk may be executed counts for more, with many, than the deterrent effect of capital punishment (itself questioned by academic studies). Gruesome details about the mechanics of executions also stoke public disquiet.

Pressure to get into international clubs has also propelled abolition. The Council of Europe, a Strasbourg-based talking shop that requires members to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights, has made the death penalty a bar to membership. That (plus other things such as election rigging) has left Belarus’s application with rigor mortis.

The Economist September 24th 2011

¹ to ditch: to get rid of; *here*: to abolish

² to whittle down: to reduce

³ to scrap: to get rid of; *here*: to abolish

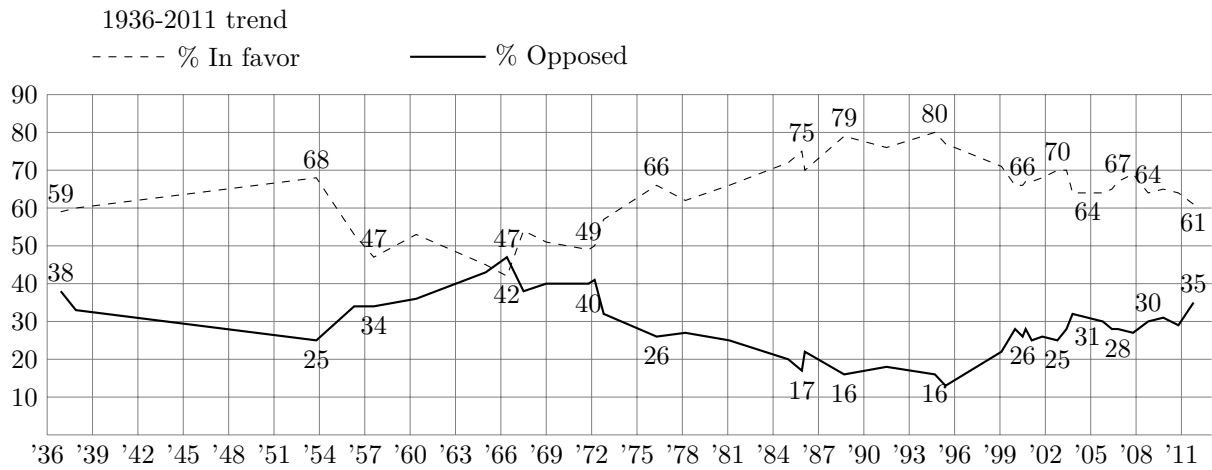
A cartoon by Clay Bennett, published in the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, September 21, 2011



Two Gallup poll charts on opinions in the United States

October 13, 2011

Are you in favor of the death penalty for a person convicted of murder?



November 8, 2010

If you could choose between the following two approaches, which do you think is the better penalty for murder?

