

# "GAS Chamber, hanging, OR FIRING SQUAD?"

BY PAT/SALTY

This WAS THE CHOICE GIVEN TO CONDEMNED INMATES OUT IN UTAH FOR MANY YEARS.

They GOT TO choose THE METHOD OF THEIR OWN EXECUTION (HOW THOUGHTFUL).

SOME, OF COURSE, REFUSED TO CHOOSE.

THOSE THAT REFUSED GOT THE STATE OF UTAH'S "DEFAULT" choice, ~~which was~~

~~the~~ THE GAS CHAMBER, ~~at that time~~

AT THAT TIME (1970's, 80's, AND, MAYBE, 90's).

"GO AHEAD AND SURPRISE ME,"

SOME SEEMED TO SAY.

MOST WHO DID CHOOSE PICKED GAS CHAMBER.

SOME - LIKE GARY GILMORE IN 1977 -

DECIDED THAT A FIRING SQUAD WAS THE....

WAY TO GO.

I DON'T THINK THAT ANY CONVICTED KILLER IN UTAH EVER CHOSE HANGING, THOUGH.

WHICH LED TO AN UNEXPECTED PROBLEM.

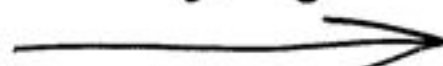
SENSE THE LAST LEGAL HANGING WAS CARRIED OUT BACK IN 1967, BY THE 1980'S AND 1990'S THERE WAS A REAL SHORTAGE OF HANGMEN - OF EXPERIENCED,

PROFESSIONAL HANGMEN (BET YOU DIDN'T



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KNOW IT WAS LISTED AS AN ACTUAL PROFESSION!)  
TODAY, THEY ARE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES,  
KIND OF LIKE THE RARE SPOTTED YELLOW  
BELLIED SAPSUCKER - ONLY WITH ROPES.  
THIS IS WHAT DEALT THE FINAL DEATH BLOW  
TO LEGALIZED HANGING IN THE U.S. -  
THE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING ANY MORE  
EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONAL HANGMEN TO  
ACTUALLY CARRY OUT SUCH EXECUTIONS.  
THEY ALL DIED OFF OR HAD TO RETIRE  
DUE TO OLD AGE, EVENTUALLY,  
COULDN'T CARRY OUT A HANGING WITHOUT  
A HANGMAN, NOW COULD THEY?  
I MEAN, THOSE WESTERN STATES (THAT  
STILL KEPT DEATH BY HANGING ON THEIR BOOKS)  
COULD HAVE WENT AHEAD AND TRIED TO  
CARRY OUT A LEGAL HANGING WITHOUT  
ANY PROFESSIONAL HANGMEN - SURE -  
BUT THEY WOULD HAVE RISKED MESSING  
IT ALL UP BIGTIME BY USING NON-PROFESSIONALS;  
RISKED MISTJUDGING, SAY, THE PRISONERS  
WEIGHT IN RELATION TO THE TYPE AND  
THICKNESS OF ROPE EMPLOYED IN RELATION  
TO THE LENGTH OF THE DROP, ETC. ETC.  
AND A DECAPITATION IS NOT A HANGING!



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INDEED, IF THE STATE AUTHORITIES OF UTAH HAD O.K.'ED SUCH A FIASCO, A HANGING THAT TURNED INTO AN "ACCIDENTAL DECAPITATION," THEY RISKED SCANDAL, PUBLIC HUMILIATION, A FIRESTORM OF CRITICISM, AND PROBABLE WRONGFULL DEATH LAWSUITS FROM THE CONDEMNED PRISONERS FAMILYS - BETTER JUST TO SHOOT THEM, OR GAS THEM, INSTEAD, BECAME THEIR POSITION. SO, ALTHOUGH LEGALIZED HANGING WAS KEPT ON THE BOOKS OUT WEST FOR YEARS, IT WAS NEVER ACTUALLY EMPLOYED. WHICH SUITED THE DEATH ROW INMATES JUST FINE, AS NONE OF THEM EVER CHOSE IT ANYWAY. OR WANTED IT, FOR SURE. EXCEPT - FINALLY - ONE PARTICULAR UTAH CONDEMNED CONVICT WHO DID! WHO DID COME OUT AT HIS SENTENCING AND SAID HE CHOSE TO BE HUNG! WHICH ~~DOES~~ SURPRISED EVERYONE NO END. INCLUDING THE GUYS OWN LAWYERS. THEY NEED'NT HAVE BEEN SURPRISED. BECAUSE HE WAS A MAN WITH A PLAN! OF HOW TO BEAT THE SYSTEM;  
"BUNCH OF STUPID HILLBILLY MORMONS - THINK



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Their GONNA' Execute me, do they?,"  
The Guy BRAGGED TO his LAWYERS  
AND GUARDS AND OTHER INMATES,  
" I'LL show Them", he vowed.

AND INDEED - FOR BETTER OR WORSE - he DID.  
SHOW Them UTAH MORMONS;

AFTER GOING ON RECORD BEFORE A UTAH  
JUDGE HAVING DEMANDED his LEGAL RIGHT  
TO Chose the METHOD OF his EXECUTION,  
AND HAVING MADE THE UNHEARD OF CHOICE  
OF CHOOSING DEATH BY hanging,

The somewhat OVERWEIGHT INMATE  
PROCEEDED TO EAT up AND Gobble up  
EVERY BIT OF FOOD he could Get his  
HANDS ON, EVEN CRAPPY FOOD THE OTHER  
PRISONERS SOLD him, GAVE him, OR DIDN'T  
WANT TO EAT.

DEATH ROW APPEALS, LASTING YEARS, GAVE  
OUR CONDEMNED INMATE EINSTEIN PLENTY  
OF TIME TO FATTEN up BEHIND BARS.  
SO FAT THAT he THEN HAD his COURT  
APPOINTED DEATH ROW APPEALS LAWYERS  
GO INTO COURT AND APPEAL TO HAVE  
his SENTENCE OVERTURNED ON THE  
GROUNDS THAT IF UTAH'S MORMON



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AUTHORITYS TRIED TO HANG him it  
WOULD be (CONSTITUTIONALLY PROHIBITED)  
"CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT"!


BECAUSE he WAS by THEN SO FAT THAT  
IN ~~THE~~ ANY hanging he WOULD be LIKELY  
TO LOSE his head - LITERALLY!

THE MORMONS ARGUED IN COURT THAT  
IT WASN'T THEIR FAULT, IT WASN'T THE  
FAULT OF THE STATE OF UTAH, BECAUSE  
THE PRISONER HIMSELF HAD CHOSEN  
TO be HUNG, THEY HADN'T FORCED him  
TO choose THAT METHOD OF EXECUTION -  
WHICH WAS his LEGAL RIGHT, THE PRISONER  
ANSWERED - AS OF COURSE THE COURT  
HAD TO AGREE.

ALSO, THE MORMONS POINTED OUT  
DESPERATELY TO THE COURT, IT WASN'T  
THEIR FAULT THE CONDEMNED MAN  
HAD GOTTEN SO OVERWEIGHT, IT WAS  
his OWN FAULT AND his OWN DOING -  
AS WAS AND IS MY RIGHT OR ANYONE  
ELSE'S RIGHT - he ANSWERED - TO EAT  
WHATEVER THEY CAN GET OR AS MUCH  
AS THEY CAN GET -  
WHICH THE COURT - HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY -  
WAS ALSO FORCED TO AGREE WITH. →

⑥

IT BECAME A BIZARRE "CATCH 22"  
LEGAL ARGUMENT THAT ~~STUMPED~~  
STUMPED SOME OF THE ~~GREAT~~ GREATEST  
MINDS IN THE APPEALS COURT SYSTEM  
AS IT SLOWLY MADE ITS WAY UP THRU  
THE APPEALS COURTS; ~~SYSTEM~~  
THE MORMON AUTHORITIES IN UTAH OFFERED  
WHAT THEY CALLED A COMPROMISE; SINCE  
THE CONDEMNED MAN WAS ~~AGREEING~~  
CLAIMING TO BE SO HORRIFIED AT THE  
THOUGHT OF ENDING UP DECAPITATED IF  
THEY HAD HIM HUNG, THE MORMONS  
OFFERED TO ALLOW HIM TO PICK AGAIN  
AND CHOOSE ONE OF THE OTHER TWO  
DEATH PENALTY OPTIONS INSTEAD (GAS  
CHAMBER OR FIRING SQUAD) —  
AT WHICH POINT THE CLEVER INMATE  
REALISED THAT HE NOW HELD THE  
UPPER HAND OVER THE STATE OF UTAH  
AND HE REFUSED TO EVEN CONTEMPLATE  
AGREEING TO ANY CHANGE IN METHOD  
(AS WAS — BUT OF COURSE — HIS LEGAL RIGHT).  
"A DEAL IS A DEAL", IN OTHER WORDS.  
"BUT ITS NOW IMPOSSIBLE TO CARRY IT OUT!",  
THE MORMON AUTHORITIES ARGUED, TO NO AVAIL.



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SO YEAR AFTER YEAR THE FAT  
INMATE SAT ON ~~THE~~ UTAHS DEATH ROW  
AS THE APPEALS AND STAYS OF EXECUTION  
AND LEGAL ARGUMENTS AND COUNTER-  
ARGUMENTS DRAGGED ON AND BOUNCED  
LIKE SOME CRAZY PING PONG BALL FROM  
APPEALS COURT TO APPEALS COURT AND  
BACK AGAIN - EVEN LONG AFTER  
ALL THE OTHER INMATES, THE ONES WHO  
HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN ON DEATH ROW  
WITH HIM, HAD ALL EVENTUALLY LOST ALL  
THEIR APPEALS AND GONE TO MEET THEIR  
MAKER, EITHER VIA A POISONOUS CLOUD  
OF CYANIDE GAS, OR IN A HAIL OF LEAD.  
OCCASIONALLY THE WARDEN OR ASSISTANT  
WARDEN WOULD ~~WALK~~ SHOW UP ON  
DEATH ROW WITH A STRANGER IN TOW,  
STOP IN FRONT OF FATTYS CELL, AND  
MAKE NOT UNFREANDLY ~~THE~~ SMALL TALK  
AS THE STRANGER - ALWAYS AN OLDER  
GUY - WOULD APPEAR TO JUST LOOK THE  
INMATE UP AND DOWN, IN A CURIOUS WAY,  
AS IF HE WERE INTERESTED IN HIM.  
AS INDEED THE OLD STRANGER WOULD BE,  
BEING THAT HE WAS A REAL PROFESSIONAL  
HANG MAN, AND FATTY ~~WAS PROBABLY PROTECTED~~

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his..... "prospective future project."  
These visits to death row became increasingly rare as the years went on, however, due to the simple fact that all the old hangmen that were still left kept dying off and became increasingly harder for the warden to find (it was still is - the wardens duty to actually arrange and oversee and carry out any "death warrant" when the time comes - in every state that has a death penalty).

it became like a twisted game of "the biggest loser" as the prison authority attempted everything they could do within the law to get their condemned inmate Buddha to lose weight so they could kill him while he, of course, did everything in his power to keep all the weight on so that he could live.

They tried to put him on a diet claiming they were concerned about his health (he had gotten close to 400 pounds) - "its a damned lie!" his lawyers





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COUNTERED; They JAST WANT TO PUT him ON A RESTRICTED DIET SO he'll LOSE ENOUGH WEIGHT<sup>SO</sup> THAT THEY CAN KILL him - SO A JUDGE ISSUED A COURT ORDER FORCING THE UTAH AUTHORITYS TO PUT him BACK ON THE USUAL DAILY INMATE DIET, TO COMBAT THE EXTRA HERSHEY BARS AND BREAD AND SUCH SMUGGLED TO FATTY BY CERTAIN OF THE OTHER INMATES, THE NEW WARDEN (THE PREVIOUS ONE HAD DIED) ORDERED NEW EXTRA SECURITY MEASURES BE PUT IN PLACE - TO WHICH FATTY COUNTERED BY GULPING AND DRINKING UNGODLY AMOUNTS OF WATER FROM HIS DEATH ROW CELLS SINK - WATER WEIGHT BEING, IN HIS CASE, BETTER THEN NO WEIGHT AT ALL - TO WHICH THE MORMONS COUNTERED BY SHUTTING OFF WATER FLOW TO HIS CELL AND LIMITING him TO ONLY A PITCHER OF WATER PER DAY. TO WHICH FATTY COUNTERED BY GOING INTO FEDERAL COURT (WITH HIS APPEALS LAWYERS) AND SECURING A COURT ORDER FORCING THE MORMONS TO TURN ALL HIS CELLS WATER BACK ON - HOW DID IT ALL END, YOU ASK? HE FINALLY ENDED UP - EVENTUALLY - DYING OF A HEART ATTACK! "RRRRRR"