**(9:22) Court Statements by Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti (1927)**

Source: <https://www.famous-trials.com/saccovanzetti/769-speeches>

Background: Italian immigrants and political anarchists Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco were arrested and convicted of a 1920 robbery and murder. They were executed in 1927 despite the lack of evidence and a confession by someone else. Sacco and Vanzetti were pardoned by the Governor of Massachusetts in 1977.

**Questions to Consider**

1. How does Vanzetti defend himself against the charges?

2. According to Vanzetti, what would he do if he had another chance?

3. What does Sacco mean when he says, “the sentence will be between two class, the oppressed class and the rich class”?

4. Why do Vanzetti and Sacco believe they were arrested, convicted, and sentenced?

1. **Statement of Bartolomeo Vanzetti**

Now I should say that I am not only innocent of all these things, not only have I never committed a real crime in my life — though some sins but not crimes — not only have I struggled all my life to eliminate crimes, the crime that the officials and the official moral condemns, but also the crime that the official moral and the official law sanctions and sanctifies — the exploitation and the oppression of the man by the man, and if there is a reason why I am here as a guilty man, if there is a reason why you in a few minutes can doom me, it is this reason and none else . . . We were tried during a time that has now passed into history. I mean by that, a time when there was a hysteria of resentment and hate against the people of our principle, against the foreigner . . . I have never stole and I have never killed and I have never spilt blood . . . I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low and misfortunate creature of the earth — I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I was an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian; I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved that for myself; but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already.

**B. Statement by Nicola Sacco**

I am not an orator. It is not very familiar with me the English language . . . I know the sentence will be between two class, the oppressed class and the rich class, and there will be always collision between one and the other. We fraternize the people with the books, with the literature. You persecute the people, tyrannize over them and kill them. We try the education of people always. You try to put a path between us and some other nationality that hates each other. That is why I am here today on this bench, for having been the oppressed class. Well, you are the oppressor . . . Among that peoples and the comrades and the working class there is a big legion of intellectual people which have been with us for seven years, but to not commit the iniquitous sentence, but still the Court goes ahead. And I think I thank you all, you peoples, my comrades who have been with me for seven years, with the Sacco-Vanzetti case.