

Capital Punishment

An hon. Member: They have become more civilized.

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): This is called the degradation of evolution!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): This is what degradation of evolution is. We see it in full evolution. We see now what evolution is, with the members of the common front in the province of Quebec. If capital punishment came from them, it would be good but as it does not, it is bad. Inasmuch as their own carcass is preserved, it is right. If by misfortune the carcass is a little disturbed, then they switch, period.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister—

[English]

This is a transcript of the Prime Minister's interview with Mark Raines, M.P.

[Translation]

—on February 12, 1976, when the Prime Minister was in British Columbia, he was interviewed on television by Mr. Mark Raines and he said this:

[English]

MARK RAINES: It's not a crime to murder a politician in cold blood.

PRIME MINISTER: . . . or a housewife, a mother of several children. No, I think my position on this, and it may have been misreported, is not one of conscience. I think society has a right to defend itself unto death, just as in self-defence you're allowed to kill somebody who's trying to kill you. If society could only survive by hanging those that were trying to destroy peace and security then it would be permissible.

[Translation]

The Prime Minister said this in British Columbia. Here, in Ottawa and in the province of Quebec he does not say this at all. In the province of Quebec he says: I am in favour of the abolition of capital punishment. In British Columbia, he said to a reporter who was interviewing him:

● (1700)

If it is dangerous for society, I suggest that capital punishment should be reinstated.

[English]

But to me that's a practical judgment, as the judges make all the time when one pleads self-defence. If you kill somebody in defence who was only going to box your ears, you know you've used too much force and you're guilty. If you kill somebody in defence who's trying to kill you then you're exonerated. I think society is in the same position. If we hang people who are really destroying a society, then we're allowed to do it.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, these days I think that some people, particularly in the common front, should not have it as easy as they do now. When one gets to the point where he challenges the law or tells people: If we do not like the premier of the province of Quebec, we will throw him in the Lachine canal to get rid of him. An exasperated, offended, mad guy who is quite prepared to drown the Quebec premier if he does not win his labour-management dispute against the Quebec government, it is simply anarchy that seems to grow ever stronger in the province of Quebec.

It is unfortunate, but we have come to encourage violence and violence arises from something: a general relaxation of discipline. We have forgotten to enforce the law. Parents are told: Listen, if your children do wrong, do not spank them. Don't! Because this is not a nice way of

[Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue).]

punishing them. With all these changes, we have come to the point where children challenge their parents and show total disregard for them, where teachers have no more respect for school boards, where school boards have no desire to respect governments. We are now living in a kind of condoned anarchy, a kind of anarchy that is even encouraged in certain areas by those people who think they represent the public's views.

Mr. Speaker, there is violence on television, in movies, over the radio, in theaters, there is violence left and right. And we wonder why at 12, 13, 15 and 16 our young become so violent. Unless we give our young people principles of public morality, a sense of respect for authority and discipline, certainly our society will not be worth much within 10 years from now.

To uproot violence, there need only be some true respect for the law.

Mr. Speaker, we are living in a violent society where everyone is frightened. Provincial premiers are frightened, in Quebec like everywhere else; ministers are not safe. Threats are made by telephone and by letter. People throw all sorts of things. We see what is happening throughout the world, in Beirut, in Africa, in all countries or nearly all, there is violence, nearly nothing is tolerated, people kill each other.

Here, in Canada, we watch what they do. Everyone admits that these people behave wrongly, that they should not use violence. We admit this, but we let our society go towards exactly the same situation as that which exists in those countries. In Montreal, union leaders like Charbonneau, Pépin, Laberge and others, or about half a dozen men, are responsible for what is now happening and what will happen in 5 or 10 years. Mr. Speaker, these men have no respect for anyone. They do not respect the law. They do not respect any member of parliament or any politician. Let those people form the government, and then we will see purges the likes of which are seen in the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia and other communist countries.

Mr. Speaker, we do not need those people. We want to protect society. But let us protect this society concretely.

That is why I appeal to the government, to the Minister of Justice and to the Solicitor General not to force the Montreal Liberal backbenchers to hide when the time for voting will come.

In hope that in a month or two when the debate is over people will not run away to Montreal to avoid voting. But I am afraid of that. They call it a free vote to throw dust in the eyes of the people of Canada, but when the time to vote comes, people run away. There is a reception, something here, something there, and they do not vote at all for or against the abolition of capital punishment.

And the people from Montreal, you know, even from Sherbrooke, know quite well that the people are in favour of maintaining capital punishment in a proportion of 80 to 90 per cent. The ministers are under some occult force pushing in favour of abolition of capital punishment—someone is pushing for sure—it is up to us members of Parliament not to push but to face the music. There will be no pushing but let the Liberal members in their caucuses tell the ministers squarely: You people, your Bill C-84 is not going to pass. The election, we will cope with that. It