

of penal and legal problems including sentences, parole and rehabilitation. This bill could have been withheld until the committee on corrections had published its report.

I also am inclined to think that in view of the various arguments, opinions and doubts raised by many hon. members of the house during this debate, the issue of capital punishment should be referred to the justice and legal affairs committee of the House of Commons, which could also study the recommendations of the Canadian Committee on Corrections.

Most Canadians, according to various Gallup polls, feel that the fear of the death penalty does indeed act as a deterrent to murder. Repeated annual surveys which I conducted in the federal constituency of Parkdale, which I represent in this house, also reveal that the majority are against the abolition of the death penalty for capital murder.

It has also been mentioned several times during this debate that in Great Britain, where an abolition bill was approved for a trial period of five years, there has been an increase in the number of murders committed and consequently there is a widespread demand for the return of capital punishment. The federal government in Canada has virtually abolished capital punishment since 1963, and yet the number of violent crimes, murders and other forms of criminality have increased. Crime in Canada has increased even though punishment has been lessened and parole made easier.

It should also be of interest to hon. members of the house to know that the average time served on commuted death sentences where parole has been granted comes to an average of 8 years and 10 months in 13 cases paroled by the government since April, 1963.

● (9:50 p.m.)

Two murderers whose death sentences were commuted were paroled after only five years of imprisonment. I think many Canadians believe that life imprisonment means life imprisonment; but we should all be aware by now that life imprisonment does not mean incarceration for life.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I am of the opinion that the alleged deterrent effect of capital punishment can be neither proved nor denied absolutely. Many other associated aspects of the matter of murder and murderers require deep study. One of them, as mentioned before, is the question of what kind of compensation a government should make

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available to the families of the victims of an act of murder. Perhaps the government should now refer the whole matter to the justice and legal affairs committee of the House of Commons, because I believe it needs a very thorough examination. I do not see why we should now be forced to vote on this bill when we are not properly prepared to do so.

**Mrs. Jean Wadds (Grenville-Dundas):** Mr. Speaker, as usual in most debates in this house we have heard some very interesting speeches, some excellent ones and some amazing ones. It seemed to me that one of the most amazing I have heard for quite some time was made this afternoon by the Registrar General (Mr. Turner). It seems to me a pity that, this afternoon at least, his good looks were not matched by logic. I do not mean to take advantage of him, since the hon. member for Winnipeg South (Mr. Sherman) has just reviewed the minister's speech rather closely and carefully. I must say however, that I do not think it was a speech of the calibre one could expect from the minister on a subject as serious as this one.

In case I appear to be envious I must admit that he has a great deal going for him. Certainly he has all the qualities of a popular, successful and young politician. He is certainly young, he is attractive, he is bilingual, he is hard-working and he is even liked by everyone in the house. But even if he is almost too good to be true, still he cannot accomplish the impossible, that is to be all things to all men. Of course he can try, and he tried very hard this afternoon. He had the additional misfortune, however, of being followed by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Harkness). I do not think anyone has ever criticized him for trying to be all things to all men. If he ever did try, he has long since given it up as a useless effort. I agree with him entirely, that this so-called compromise bill makes it very difficult for those who favour abolition of capital punishment and makes it equally difficult for those who favour retention of capital punishment to reach a decision on this matter. It cannot in all conscience be supported by either.

I have wanted to speak on this bill for two reasons, the first being that I consider it a very obvious and blatant abuse of our parliamentary system, and the second that I am against the bill itself. We hear many justified and proper criticisms of the workings of this house, but it seems to me that surely one rule of the house that has not yet been disputed is that when the majority makes a decision and