

### *Capital Punishment*

that, even if we had before us a bill which would apply the death penalty in practice, even if we had the kind of penalty this bill does not provide, I would have to vote against it or try to amend it. This is not because of an unwillingness to execute, which might be interpreted as naïve or sentimental; I am quite prepared to have society take a life if that would serve a necessary social purpose which no other instrument can serve. It is because the evidence I have sought suggests that the death penalty does not do the job my constituents want to see done. I would have to vote against any legislation which came forward, even legislation with teeth. This bill does not do that job. It does not do what my constituents want to be done. It does not stop murderers who want to murder. It does not add to public safety in any real sense, although it might offer a temporary psychological security.

What we have to do here—and more particularly what those of us whose constituents clearly want an effective deterrent to murder have to do—is try to find some deterrent which will be effective. The bill before us will not do that job. Nor would a more widespread application of the death penalty, if we believe the studies made by people whose business it is to know. A long fixed term might. It would at least provide some psychological security to society without making the government a killer or without indulging in the fraud this bill involves when it promises a penalty which, will not be implemented.

Others in this House have noted frequently a concern for order and a desire to stop—with this legislation, and symbolically—what is called permissiveness. I believe we must take this concern seriously. I am no sociologist, but politicians do their own kind of sampling and I think it is fair to presume that many of my constituents who are most anxious to see capital punishment reinstated are people whose lives are still based on things that do not change. Some of them farm. Others live in view of the constant mountains. Many practice a strong, firm faith. They are settled people. This is not to say they are out-moded or inept at meeting modern challenges. Indeed, some are highly skilled, innovative, imaginative. What distinguishes them is that they have grown accustomed to having something to come back to. And they are worried, now, that what they knew is being broken down—not just some of it, but all. They are apprehensive of the day when there will be nothing to come back to—no respect for law, no respect for faith, no familiar landmarks. This is not intended as a eulogy for these people. Quite the opposite.

I believe we must begin to pay much more attention, when deciding on national policies, to the values and aspirations of these settled Canadians, not just because they pay the fare for many of the programs we propose here but also because in many cases they possess a special expertise which comes from experience. They know about things we only talk about. Whether or not we see it, they see plenty of evidence to show that government today is moving to exclude them from influence. There is a very real feeling in my constituency that power in Canada has passed to a narrow, insensitive, metropolitan elite, and while the people of Rocky Mountain are prepared to give that elite some voice, they also want a voice of their own. The danger is that they feel passed by.

[Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain).]

If I might reiterate a theme I have raised before, let me just say this: when parliament becomes preoccupied by the need to build great cities we seem to overlook the equal need to preserve existing communities, whether they are neighbourhoods in a metropolis or small towns in a countryside. When we become preoccupied by the demands of the venturing young, we sometimes forget the desire of older Canadians for a sense of stability or even for an adequate income. When we devise fancy new programs to give young people summer jobs they will enjoy, we overlook the resentment such programs can cause among people schooled to believe in the virtue of an honest day's work. I do not intend to devalue the importance of programs for transient youth, or of Opportunities for Youth or of help to build great cities. My point is simply that if our emphasis on these goals seems too complete, if we seem consistently to ignore the requirements of the settled people of the country or to demean their values, we make them feel less at home in their country. Those of us who are genuinely concerned about a sense of alienation, or even of disorder, should look in this direction for solutions rather than try to redress such a problem under the guise of amending the criminal law.

**Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley):** Mr. Speaker, having heard many of the speeches made on Bill C-2 during the present debate, and having, also, heard many of the speeches made five years ago on what is basically the same measure, I wish to speak briefly to explain my reason for voting against the legislation before us when the question is put.

Basically, this bill deals with the age-old question of the sanctity of human life on the one hand, and the security of society on the other. The debate on this issue symbolizes the confusion in which parliament presently finds itself. Once a question of conscience arises there will, undoubtedly, be confusion and differences of opinion. Bill C-2, on which we are going to vote tonight, to me completely symbolizes this parliament. It symbolizes a government that refuses to lead and leaders who are afraid to govern. This bill is a sham, a farce and a charade. As the hon. member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Clark) said a moment ago, this bill stands not for abolition and not for retention. We are going to send to the legal affairs and justice committee a qualified abolition bill or a qualified retention bill, depending on how you interpret it, so that for another five years we are going to have what we have had for the last five years. As long as a man murders a policeman or a prison guard, there is a chance he will have to pay the supreme price; if he murders anyone else, obviously he does not pay the supreme price following due process of law.

• (1630)

I listened to the leaders of the parties who spoke last Wednesday. I was very glad that they entered into the debate because this was the catalyst that decided me to participate. All three leaders of the national parties, in effect, supported the sending of Bill C-2 to committee. If you follow their arguments, Mr. Speaker, basically they support a form of abolition as contained in the bill, if not total abolition. But I suggest in all seriousness that the remarks of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Leader