

Capital Punishment

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): We pass—Any charge! We pass regulations, we pass laws and the governments are first in failing to enforce them. We have seen this! These days, especially in Montreal, since it is in our province, we hear every morning, on the radio, on all open-line programs, people objecting to the abolition of capital punishment not because they want vengeance, but because they want justice. They are afraid to walk freely on Sainte-Catherine street or any other street in Montreal. The representatives of Montreal ridings know it. The hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Leblanc) knows it. Everyone complains and here, in Parliament, the Solicitor General, who comes from Montreal and is aware of it, would, if he took a referendum or made a survey in his own riding, obtain exactly the same results as we do. But he persists in saying: I favour the abolition of capital punishment. Mr. Speaker, let us look at the surveys made among members of Parliament. In *La Presse*, in an article by André Ouimet, in the Parliamentary Bureau, in the *Ottawa Journal*, we find the following:

Death penalty will be abolished

This shows the results obtained after interviews with members of parliament. This article says, and I quote:

[English]

A recent Gallup Poll showed that 69 per cent of Canadians surveyed favoured a complete return to the death penalty—not only for murdering prison guards and policemen but also ‘any innocent person.’

[Translation]

This has been done here in Ottawa, and everywhere in Canada we have obtained 69 per cent. In fact it is 70 per cent; I would say it is more than that, it is 86, 87 per cent. Mr. Speaker, why is the government afraid of the referendum? Because it knows it would be beaten on that issue. We have here a letter from a concerned Canadian from Edmonton in Alberta who is in favour of maintaining capital punishment. This letter originates from Mr. M. Marleau from Edmonton. The Solicitor General has a copy of it. This letter states: “Mr. Stanfield knows Peter Loughheed”. It is addressed to the Attorney General of Alberta, to the RCMP Commissioner, to Chief Constable R. Lunney, and to myself. Here again, it states clearly—

An hon. Member: You are important!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Yes, that is right! But I am telling you about it because if you are not hitting the headlines, you will at least know what those who do receive on the Liberal side. Mr. Speaker, about letters and articles in favour of maintaining the capital punishment, I have a letter here from Sudbury, Ontario. It is not far from the place of one NDP member. I have another one from New Westminster in British Columbia, Dr. Calverly who says:

[English]

Dear Sir:

We are trying to recommend that you decide upon and vote in favor of retention of the death penalty. We also recommend that you use your influence to ensure that it is implemented where there are no extenuating circumstances to warrant stay of execution.

[Translation]

He even is against changing rulings, against exemptions.

[English]

More humane and acceptable methods than hanging should also be considered.

[Translation]

He is against hanging but for capital punishment.

[English]

Both of us were born and grew up in the heartland of Canada. We are well qualified psychiatrists who have spent the past twenty-five years interviewing and treating Canadians from all walks of life. We feel that this background and experience qualifies us to offer you an opinion on this subject, and that we have both a professional and social responsibility to do so.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, this letter comes from New Westminster, British Columbia. It is signed by Dr. M. O. Calverley and M. R. E. Helgason, also a physician. There are also two psychiatrists—

[English]

Mr. Gilbert: They bury their mistakes.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Oh, yes; you are much better than the doctors in this country. I know they can make mistakes as you are making a mistake right now.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats are always wrong.

[English]

You always think you are right but you are never right.

Here is a letter addressed to Mr. Réal Caouette, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa. It is from a United Church woman.

[Translation]

This one comes from the United Church Women and I am not too sure whether or not the hon. member who spoke before me is not a United Church Women “preacher” as we say.

[English]

Dear sir:

I have noticed your excellent stand on behalf of capital punishment and am taking the liberty of sending an extract from the book of Dr. Emil Brunner on the *lex talionis*. This throws new light on a great law which has been criticized by the abolitionists of the death penalty.

Do you think that a man who herds 30 people into a restaurant closet in Montreal and causes their deaths deserves to go on living?

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, this letter was dated in late March: Thanking you for your help. She is a member of the United Church Women. I have another one here from the Church of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada dated April 30 and signed by Mr. Charles Yates, General Secretary, about Bill C-84. He gives a complete list of the various areas where churches are working in cooperation with this one and where they ask for the retention of capital punishment. In the province of Quebec the situation was different. I even think that the synod of Catholic Bishops asked for the abolition of capital punishment. It is their right. As a Catholic, I am for the retention of capital punishment. When I was a little boy at the primary school and later in college I was told that murderers should be hanged, that there was no other solution. It is none of my business if those people changed their minds today but I did not change my mind. I am still convinced—