

An hon. Member: Why don't you go back to sleep again?

Mr. Byrne: I should like to ask the Chair to rule as to whether or not the hon. member is making a reflection upon a decision of this house, and I refer to the acceptance in principle of this bill.

The Chairman: The Chair is familiar with the substance of clause one. It is my opinion that it is close to the substance of the principle of the bill which was discussed at the second reading stage. However, it is a little difficult to decide that what is being said now is not in accordance with the substance of clause one. In any event, I would ask the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre to continue.

Mr. Churchill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

An hon. Member: I think he is out of order.

Mr. Monteith: He is nothing of the sort; he is not out of order.

Mr. More: Mr. Chairman, I think the member has just reflected on the ruling of the Chair, and that he should be ruled out of order.

The Chairman: Perhaps the best thing for the committee to do is allow the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre to continue with the bill.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, I was drawing attention to the fact that I posed a question the other day based on a statement I read in the newspaper to the effect that an opinion poll had been held at the Canadian pavilion at Expo regarding the abolition of capital punishment. *Hansard* has recorded my question based on the report, which indicated that 19,000 voted in favour of abolition and 5,500,000 voted against. I now ask the Solicitor General whether this poll was conducted at the Canadian pavilion and, if so, by which department, and are these figures accurate? The Solicitor General did not answer that question, although he said he knew nothing about it. Since I asked the question two days have elapsed and I have not yet received an answer. This whole matter has been referred to in letters carried by various newspapers, and it has been brought to my attention by a citizen who wrote me. If this report is accurate I suggest that parliament is now attempting to accomplish something which is not in accord with

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the general feeling of the citizens of this country.

I am prepared to support the amendment moved by the hon. member for Bow River. His argument was very ably presented, and I should like to reiterate his surprise that the Solicitor General would not accept the principle of the amendment. Its purpose is simply to place a citizen who is acting to protect society, in accordance with the law, in the same position as a police officer and others mentioned in the bill. Surely there is nothing wrong with that suggestion. As mentioned by the hon. member for Bow River, it will soon become known that a citizen acting jointly with an officer of the law, or on his own, in upholding the law, might be in serious danger because he is not protected. I presume that these citizens will wonder why they should co-operate with our police forces or attempt to assist in upholding the law. Surely it would be wrong to create this feeling among our citizenry. I suggest we should do the opposite. We should encourage our citizens to help uphold the law by supporting our police forces. Unless this amendment is accepted the reverse will occur.

A criminal who kills a citizen who is assisting a police officer should be subject to the same penalty as a criminal who kills a member of a police force. That is all we are attempting to accomplish by this amendment, and it is inconceivable that the Solicitor General and the government would not accept that proposition. If the government is not going to accept the amendment we should be told why. We have not put this amendment forward as a delaying tactic, as some people might argue. It has been put forward in all seriousness, because there is an omission in the bill. We are not unfamiliar with omissions in bills placed before this house during the last four years. If someone listed the bills of major importance this government has introduced which have not been subject to amendment, it would be very small. Every bill of major importance brought before this house in the last four years has been amended because of loose drafting, omission of something of that nature.

• (8:40 p.m.)

All we are suggesting is that this point has been overlooked. We are finding no fault with anyone. We are finding no fault with the drafters, no fault with the Solicitor General. We are simply saying that when many minds are applied to a bill in this house, someone very frequently discovers there has