

*Amendments Respecting Death Sentence*

of those convicted of the murder of policemen. As we are asked to support this bill, then we are also being told that the actions of the government in the last several years in commuting the sentences of those convicted of murder of prison guards or policemen were wrong. There is something unsound about this; it is not logical as I understand it.

There is another factor which is very interesting at the present time. I refer to the situation in Great Britain. A great deal has been made of the fact that the British parliament two years ago passed a bill providing for a five-year provisional abolition of capital punishment. Many members during the debate last year, and I imagine they will again this year, said that this was an example by a progressive nation which we should follow. However, a strange report has come out of Britain written by Canadian newspaperman Don McGillivray of the Southam news service. It was published in the November 7 issue of all Southam papers, including the *Ottawa Citizen*. The article reads in part:

Britain's five-year experiment with the complete abolition of capital punishment is two years old on Wednesday and already a petition to bring back hanging is gathering 5,000 signatures a week—

—the campaigners for renewal of the death penalty claim the murder rate and incidence of violent crime have both risen since abolition.

Home Secretary Roy Jenkins—Britain's Minister of Justice and Police—disputes the statistical connection. But estimates made by Jenkins' own ministry shows 35 capital murders last year and 32 the year before, compared with an average of 20.5 a year in the previous eight years, when a limited death penalty was in effect.

Without taking the time of the house to read the whole article, I point out that Mr. McGillivray closes by saying:

In the latest Gallup poll on the subject, 56 per cent of those questioned thought the murder rate had risen since abolition, compared with 8 per cent who thought it had gone down.

This is the evidence of what has happened in Great Britain. Mention has been made once or twice during the debate today that evidence is some states of the United States seems to indicate that the murder rate had gone down following abolition. On the other hand, one can find more states in which there has been abolition where the statistics will prove that the murder rate has gone up than those where the statistics will prove that it has gone down. My point is not to rehash what was said in last year's debate so far as statistics are concerned. Nevertheless, I think we should be very careful when we consider certain statistics which are used by those arguing in favour of abolition.

There is one other point I wish to mention. We have a responsibility, as those who make the laws of the land, to consider each problem in all its aspects. One of the aspects of murder and the abolition of capital punishment for those who are guilty of premeditated murder about which little is said concerns those who are the victims of murderers. Our crime rate has been rising very rapidly, and we are extremely concerned about this. We should be concerned likewise about those who are the victims of criminals, particularly of murderers.

Police Chief Ralph Booth of Vancouver made a very significant statement in this regard, and I should like to quote part of it as it appeared in the Vancouver newspapers:

—the war on crime can be successfully fought only if crime victims are compensated for their injuries. He favours legislation authorizing establishment of a board, similar to the workmen's compensation board, having the power to compensate victims of criminal activity.

"We are spending millions of dollars on rehabilitating criminals but nothing is being done for their victims," Chief Booth said.

"The police know only too well that their success in fighting crime depends upon the co-operation of the public".

He said many persons are reluctant to aid policemen in difficulty because of personal danger and the lack of compensation.

"So often when citizens do help police officers in trouble and are injured as a result of helping the police, they have no way of recovering damages for injuries.

● (5:40 p.m.)

Then he goes on to deal with the problem of caring for those who are the victims of criminals, the rehabilitation of their families and compensation for the damage that has been done.

I do not intend to go further, Mr. Speaker. I believe the points I have enunciated are very strong refutations of the validity of Bill No. C-168. In fact, I think the whole basis for its presentation to the house, in view of the points I have already outlined, is illogical and we should not be dealing with it.

In closing, I should like to say a few words on the principle involved. What I have to say in this regard is not much different from what I said in the debate last year. Certainly we must be concerned about crime prevention. Is it hardly reasonable to campaign strongly for the possibility of the redemption of murderers, most of whom have a long record of violent crime, while millions of pliable minds watch men and women being stabbed, shot, strangled, drowned, poisoned and maltreated in almost every possible way