

Capital Punishment

favour of abortion too, in favour of killing an infant even before its birth. But once it is born, it's a different matter. The murderer who kills his victim should not be touched. This is their overall, their general policy: Kill the innocent and let the criminals, the bandits, the murderers live.

Mr. Speaker, we are not very much in favour of this theory. Now I come to Question No. 4, where 44,000 persons answer that it is not the method used which makes them endorse capital punishment in Canada. Question No. 5, I ask which method would you use? Some choose the electric chair. Others suggest the gas chamber, others poison. They suggest giving poison to an individual as you give poison to a dog; or the firing squad—

● (1640)

[English]

Mr. Benjamin: How about drawing and quartering?

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): I will send them to you.

[Translation]

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): Let them spend an hour or two in the House!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Excuse me, I did not hear.

Mr. Gendron: Let them spend an hour or two in the House!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): My hon. friend might settle the matter during the next elections, he needs only stay home.

Mr. Speaker, Question No. 6:

[English]

"If you are opposed to capital punishment in any form what alternative punishment would you prescribe?"

[Translation]

The answer of the public: 168 suggest rehabilitation treatments and psychiatric treatments; no parole, 1712 and parole, 194. That is not really much out of a total number of 68,745. Here, 87.6 per cent of the answers are favorable to capital punishment.

When the Solicitor General or the Minister of Justice goes to his riding in Vancouver for instance to speak about abolition, I receive dozen of letters from British Columbia people who ask that capital punishment be maintained. Lately I made a sort of survey in my riding and I sent a questionnaire to all residents, not only to people I knew but to everyone. Out of 813 answers from my riding, 86.9 per cent were in favour of capital punishment. When I talk opinions throughout the country, it is about the same thing: in Toronto this percentage was very much the same—87.6 per cent; in my riding it is 86.9 per cent and in Montreal there are ridings where this figure is even higher with 86 or 87 per cent in favour of capital punishment.

Mr. Speaker, while we face all these demands and all these suggestions, we have here in Parliament a government and minister who present to the House a bill such as Bill C-84. I think honestly and sincerely, from the bottom of my heart, that these people should resign to make room

[Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue).]

for others so that we have here people who truly represent the opinions expressed by their constituents and the Canadian people. I have heard the Solicitor General repeat often that there are means other than capital punishment to protect our society. I am still waiting for these means which will protect our society. In Montreal, I do not know how many murders we have had since the beginning of the year and one hears here in the House about ways and means to rehabilitate criminals. We let a murderer loose in the street, he kills or he perpetrates a hold up. Just recently a murderer who had been sentenced to life imprisonment was released and soon afterwards was again arrested after a holdup. The judges and the lawyers do not know what to do with this kind of situation.

Recently, there was the case of a youth of 14 who had not been sentenced to death but had committed a holdup in a small shop with a loaded gun. The owner defended himself and killed the youth of 14. But then the judge gave him a lecture saying: "Do not you think that for a theft of \$40 you went just a little too far. It is the judge's intelligence which dictated those words to him. If the amount stolen had been \$40,000, that would have been better. It is not the amount of dollars stolen from the grocer which is important but the fact that the young boy was armed to the teeth. If the small shopkeeper had not defended himself, he would have been killed. But the judge did not think of that. "Do you not think that for \$40 you went just a little too far?" Our judges must be naïve to say that in court to someone who tried to save himself but is treated like an idiot by a judge who thought himself intelligent.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if I shall be charged with contempt of court, but if the judge finds that the shoe, fits, let him wear it. There is a limit, after all. The police are hindered, they have to cope with gangsters all year long. One is arrested, put into prison, two hours later he is out on bail. He is charged with murder, but is told: Your trial will take place only in July, so you are released. Give us \$25,000 bail on property or ask your aunt or uncle to sign the form. You meet the guy on the same street, the same sidewalk, in front of the same policemen. What happens? We see what happens in Montreal. Montreal is not the only city.

An hon. Member: That is most exaggerated.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): No! Listen to that, "exaggerated". Come with me and I will show you.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for I do not know which constituency does not know that these guys are released almost immediately after they are arrested. Young offenders do not stay two hours in prison after robbing right and left, sometimes ten or twelve times in a row. They are brought before the court, and they are told immediately: For rehabilitation, we take your word. Do not commit the same offences! And he is immediately sent back in to the streets.

● (1650)

Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot about Montreal but the same happens in Toronto. We find the same thing in Regina and Vancouver. There is a shortage of justice at the present time. We pass—

Mr. Benjamin: On a murder charge?