

tion want a blanket imposition of capital punishment. That is a falsehood. The vast majority of Canadians are normal citizens who find the death penalty a distasteful subject to discuss. Common sense warns them that the removal of the final right of society to carry out the supreme punishment tells the criminal that no matter how horrible and vicious the crime, his own life will be protected.

Several weeks ago I mentioned that in the many letters and phone calls I have received from constituents they share with me their concerns about being safe and that their children will grow up in a safe society. At that time I quoted Mr. William Gold, of the *Calgary Herald*, who described the type of individual society fears when he wrote:

Contemporary society is producing a singularly savage type of animal, entirely lacking in comprehension of, or respect for, the lives of other people. These psychopaths know perfectly well what they are doing is wrong legally and morally, but the act of murder causes them no sense of personal revulsion.

Society wants guaranteed protection from that sort of individual because who can say where he will strike next.

I have always rejected the notion that society seeks vengeance. I call it simple justice and a desire for safety. Capital punishment has been upheld through the centuries because of the commitment of society to the sanctity of life. It is a principle of law that the penalty must in some way fit the crime. That is the basis of having a penal code.

The death penalty is based on the belief that taking a life is so great an offence it requires the supreme penalty. Having regard to the qualms of those who cringe at the death penalty, Hon. Ernest Manning made a very pertinent observation as follows:

In this respect there is evident in society today a strange and indefensible inconsistency. Many of those who are the most vocal in demanding the abolition of the death penalty because they hold it to be morally wrong to put a murderer to death are frequently the same people who are champions of abortion on demand. In other words, they argue it is morally right to deliberately destroy the life of an unborn innocent child, but it is morally wrong to exact the death penalty in the case of a murderer who has deliberately taken the life of another human being.

Such reasoning is beyond me. If our country is to be consistent about the state's right to impose the death penalty, then we must reject the idea that it is legalized murder. If that were the case a soldier defending this country in war and a policeman using his gun in the line of duty would be guilty of legalized murder. I doubt very seriously if anyone in this House would be ready to say that we should disarm our army and police.

● (1120)

Mr. Speaker, in the numerous articles I have had the opportunity to read on the issue of capital punishment I have searched for the one argument, the one statistic, the one tidbit of new information which could somehow shed new light on this debate. The fact of the matter is that as individuals we have been too concerned about statistics to meet the real issue head on. That issue is that we, as elected representatives of the Canadian people, have a moral responsibility to deal with capital punishment. I for one will not shrink from that responsibility.

Throughout history as organized nations emerged it has been recognized that society has the right to impose any kind of penalty on any offender against the law. In every

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case where the law is broken there is a penalty of some sort. A state that can incarcerate an offender for 25 years surely is capable of applying capital punishment. In the discussions concerning murders we hear such comments from abolitionists as, "the murderer is a product of his environment" and, "society must show some degree of sympathy". It worries me, Mr. Speaker, that we might be heading down a road of uncontrolled permissiveness that would have us take the easy way at the expense of public safety. How much sympathy I wonder has been shown for the family and friends of the victims of ruthless murderers.

Even if parliament does pass Bill C-84 and abolishes capital punishment, I believe that every citizen of this country should ask the government in a resounding chorus: What are you going to do about your soft-on-crime record? This government has gone too far in its efforts to appease an elitist minority who have no concern about crime run rampant. Time and time again we have seen this government shirk its responsibility in the field of law enforcement.

In the area of law enforcement, Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly mention one segment of our society which will be especially endangered by the abolition of capital punishment,—our police and prison guards. There was a time when the boys in blue were held in high regard, indeed respected, and it was the boyhood dream of many to some day be a policeman. In view of the way our law enforcement officers are being hindered and threatened, must we say that those law enforcement officers who die in the course of duty will do so in vain! I should hope not.

The Nuremberg trials, Mr. Speaker, showed the world that no one can shrug off responsibility. The free nations had a responsibility to show the cold-blooded Nazis that wholesale murder will not be tolerated, so we must tell the criminal element that murder will not be tolerated in Canada. This parliament will not solve the problem of the cancer of crime by merely voting for or against capital punishment, but I contend that a vote for retention will be the beginning of an all-out battle against the ills of crime.

Now that I have put to this House my reasons for asking for the re-instatement of capital punishment I wish to return to the subject of public opinion and the will of the public. Some day all of us who have been elected to this parliament will be judged on our decisions in regard to bill C-84 and indeed on the attitude that we have towards crime. We live, supposedly, in a democratic society in which the government must express the will of the people. It certainly is a sad commentary on the members of the government when their arrogance makes them believe they are more knowledgeable than the vast majority of people. When this happens I fear that we have only seen the beginning of rule by elitist minorities.

As we head toward a decision on capital punishment I hope that every member of this House takes into account that this is not only a vote for or against capital punishment but that it will determine the attitude and direction of this country in years to come in regard to crime. A society without the ultimate protection might some day find itself in the sad state where the law of the jungle rules. When I say that, I can almost hear the professional liberals accusing me of being a prophet of doom. I believe