

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed by the house that private members notices of motions numbers 15 and 16 stand and retain their place on the order paper?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Motions 15 and 16 stand. Then, notice of motion No. 19, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

Mr. Knowles: It was my understanding that we had agreed to carry on with the debate on capital punishment. For that reason I would prefer not to proceed with this motion today. I am not asking for special consideration; I will proceed with it the next day private members' motions are called.

Mr. Speaker: Motion No. 19 stands.

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION BOARD

PROPOSED COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDANTS

Mr. Ralph B. Cowan (York-Humber) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should consider the expediency of introducing legislation for the creation of a criminal injuries compensation board to hear the pleas of persons who have suffered permanent injury or disability as the victims of crime and award compensation to such persons or their dependants as would seem fair in the circumstances, and wherever possible to do so, to impose payment of compensation by criminals to those they have injured.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have a seconder for his motion, or would he like to suggest a seconder?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, if there is no seconder, I had not noticed it, but just to allow an hon. member to express his opinions, according to the principles of democracy, I support the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Ralph Cowan (York-Humber): Mr. Speaker, I am indebted to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for relinquishing his right to speak at this time during private members hour, because this gives me the opportunity of speaking on a subject that is very, very close to my heart and fortunately running parallel to the discussion we are now having on capital punishment.

As one can tell from the date of this notice of motion, May 9, 1967, I introduced this notice of motion the day after this session began. Hon. members will perhaps recall that the same subject matter was discussed for one hour in June of 1966. At that time it was talked out by a parliamentary secretary to one of the members of the cabinet. That hon. member made the very bright statement that he did not understand the motion. I regret the situation if this parliament must wait until every parliamentary assistant understands what he is talking about before a motion can come to a vote. I sincerely hope that today the parliamentary assistant understands the purpose of this motion.

There have been quite a few speakers on the capital punishment bill who have referred to compensation for innocent victims of crimes. They have stated it is necessary that action be taken under this heading. I refer particularly to the Registrar General of Canada (Mr. Turner) who, if you will look at the remarks he made in support of the abolition of capital punishment, stated that he favored compensation for the innocent victims of criminal acts.

When I listen to all the people running around this house of parliament weeping over the fate of murderers I am filled with disgust, because I weep over the fate of the victims, not the murderers. In speaking on this notice of motion that the government should consider the expediency of introducing legislation for the creation of a criminal injuries compensation board I am thinking in particular of a woman who lives in Scarborough, and who has three or four children. Her husband was an insurance salesman. He was walking along Yorkville avenue in Toronto about a year ago when some words were exchanged between him and a young fellow about 17 or 18 years of age. You may remember that this young 17 or 18 year old jumped up on a parapet about 18 inches high and kicked this husband and father of three of four children on the side of the head, knocking him to the pavement. The impact broke his skull and he died in hospital shortly thereafter.

The man—perhaps I should say the youth—who kicked this insurance salesman, is now under sentence of four years in the Kingston penitentiary. The taxpayers of Canada now have the opportunity to feed him three times a day and give him a warm bed. He also gets proper recreation. In addition to this, the judge said he would send