

*Amendments Respecting Death Sentence*

administration of justice. There is nothing that is more prone to lead people to break the law than when the law itself is held in contempt by those who enforce the law generally.

When we have a government which refuses to obey the law as confirmed by parliament, than I submit the effect on the people of this country is most harmful. How can we in one breath talk about the sanctity of life and the necessity of the state showing a good example—and I feel this is a good, valid and logical argument—when at the same time we have this government doing all it can to hold the administration of justice up to contempt. I think the general manner in which it is presented does more harm to this cause than the Solicitor General's efforts in this regard; that is, the suggestion that policemen and prison guards should be made a special case. I am sure it is the duty of government to encourage the people to have respect for law enforcement officers. Certainly we know that the only way we can have an orderly society where life, limb and property may be held safe is when people have enough respect for the law enforcement agencies that they will give them their full and willing co-operation.

It is absolutely essential that we have respect for our policemen. How can we have respect for policemen if this government tells us that a policeman must have the psychological crutch of knowing that his life, if taken, will result in somebody being hanged, whereas someone can shoot the wife and children of that policeman and then only go to jail for life. Where is the sense and logic in that sort of thing? If it is true, as I have always argued and as the Solicitor General has argued, that hanging is no greater deterrent than life imprisonment, then obviously it is no greater deterrent to the shooting of a policeman. By putting this exception in the bill we do violence to our own arguments. We show weakness in the face of our own arguments, and I submit we hold our law enforcement people up to ridicule as people asking a special favour of parliament, to make them a special class. The suggestion is made that a special bit of protection is needed and that it is the police agencies which must have that special protection.

It is ridiculous to suggest that those people who are paid for the purpose of running the extra risk involved in dealing with the lawless elements and protecting the citizens are themselves the ones who need special protection. Surely all the statistics which have been

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quoted have convinced us that hanging is no greater deterrent than life imprisonment. We have looked at the situation in the states and in the countries where they have abolished capital punishment. No one, I am sure, will argue, when we take two states of about the same size and find that the policemen have received about the same treatment in one state where there is no capital punishment as they have in the other, or will suggest that there is a greater incidence of brutality or murder of prison guards in one than there is in the other.

For the life of me I cannot justify in my mind the bringing of this exception into the bill, when to me it seems to be pure hypocrisy or a psychological sop in order to get some police chiefs off the neck of the government. I am aware of the amount of propaganda put out by the police chiefs. But surely the simple fact that they are familiar with crime does not suggest that they understand the psychology of the criminal mind any better than most of us in this house.

I have listened to the arguments in the house and I should like to refer to the speech made by the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton (Mr. Flemming) last night. It was a beautiful example of logic and illogic. He made a very logical speech about the duty of the government to obey parliament and about the unfairness—unreasonableness, I think he called it—and the illegality of the government asking parliament to deal with this matter when we have disposed of it once. That part of his speech I thought was very logical, clear and brief and contained thinking which I do not believe could be improved. Yet at the same time when he considered the question of abolition, his statement was that his duty is to protect the people of this country, and of course he could not consider abolishing the death penalty because it would mean leaving the people defenceless. To me that logic is incomprehensible.

Surely the statistics in respect of two similar states, side by side, which have been studied over a period of years, prove the fallacy of that or of the suggestion that the death penalty is a deterrent. When after years of trial and error we can come only to the conclusion that there is nothing to show that the taking away of the death penalty is likely to lead to an increase in capital murder, how can a man whose mind thinks logically say, "Well, we must keep it or we leave them defenceless." I have listened to the arguments in the house on this question