

talking about hanging, the electric chair or what you will. We are talking about whether one man should die for having taken the life of another.

Speakers in this debate have devoted almost their entire attention to the fate of convicted criminals, whether they should die by the rope or in the chair. The whole emphasis of this debate has been directed toward the criminal and what might happen to him. Mr. Speaker, our concern should not be for convicted criminals but for law abiding Canadian citizens and the victims of crimes committed by criminals. Perhaps here we should be speaking for the dead, not for those who caused them to die.

Retentionism has been characterized in this debate as a vicious policy, one that caters to viciousness. With all due deference to those who have spoken along these lines, I just will not accept their argumentation. There is nothing vicious in the normal, law abiding Canadian. He is not vindictive nor is he vengeful. I submit that he is a charitable being. The letters I have received from my constituents along with the survey that they have completed are ample testimony to that effect. They have thought seriously about this problem. They are not vengeful. They are seeking other ways. Some shrink from hanging and the gallows; they say, "Find another quicker, less dramatic form of imposing the death penalty, but see that it is imposed."

Some are reluctant retentionists but because they fear the direction society is taking they want discipline back. They want people to know that misdemeanours will be punished and that criminals will pay for their crimes. I gathered this during the election campaign and from the correspondence I am now receiving. Canadians are not vicious, nor vindictive, nor vengeful. They are compassionate people, but they are fearful of the direction in which Canadian society is heading. What they are looking for is national self-protection. It is parliament's job to provide it. Civilized society is an ordered society. Regrettably, more and more people are becoming disturbed by the growing disorderliness of society and are preparing on their own to ensure that as far as they themselves are concerned, there will be order—or else! They are acquiring small arms for their own self-defence.

In these circumstances this parliament has cause to worry. The notion of an orderly society is beginning to erode; and when erosion starts, who knows where it will end? This falling away of society from its reliance on the upholders of law and order must be halted. There must be punishments for crimes and those punishments must be carried out. Society will no longer tolerate subservience to that philosophy which sees all criminality solely in terms of sickness and therefore devotes more attention to its alleviation than to the alleviation of the unrest that that sickness—if that is what it is—is spreading throughout society.

According to the survey that I have already mentioned, Mr. Speaker, there are 85 to 90 per cent in favour of the retention of capital punishment. These are the people who are either afraid of or have misgivings about where our society is heading. The views that I am receiving from my riding as a result of this survey also indicate that there are some 8 per cent to 10 per cent opposed to any form of

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capital punishment on the grounds that it is barbaric, medieval and unworthy of civilized persons.

• (1530)

I respect the views of these people: I do not agree with them, but I respect them and I voice their concerns in this House. These too, are compassionate people. Some of them, of course, are opposed to hanging because they feel we should not take life. Some advocate life imprisonment and some, equally compassionate, are undecided. Not wanting to take life, they are none the less fearful that permissiveness, if allowed to go unchecked, can lead to a society where no one is safe and no order can be assured. These views I wish to record, Mr. Speaker.

I should like to borrow from two speeches that have already contributed to this discussion, one by the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Beattie) and the other by a member whose riding I cannot recall but who spoke about "stepping into another man's moccasins". What the electorate is asking us to do—of this I am convinced, Mr. Speaker—is to provide them with the security and safety in society that they see slipping away from them. We are also being asked to provide a law which will enable judge and jury to step into the moccasins of the victim and in the cold, unemotional light of calm deliberation, determine guilt, award penalty even if that penalty is death for the accused, and see that it is executed. What is not so clear to my constituents, of course, are the confines within which I operate. Can this bill bring back what they want? Can it bring back the death penalty the 85 per cent want?

I should like to record the options as I see them. First, I can agree with the bill as it stands and permit the experimental period to be resumed. This in effect would suspend the death penalty. Second, I can oppose the bill, seeking its defeat in order to secure restoration of the status quo ante-1968; this would ensure the return of the death penalty for murder.

My options are clear. I oppose this bill. This is my inclination; this is what I am directed to do by my constituents; and I appeal to all members of this House who want order to return to our Canadian society to oppose this bill. Laxness and permissiveness have gone far enough; we must tighten up our discipline. I oppose this bill not because it is a government bill but because it represents an abdication of the law and order concept which any self-respecting parliament should uphold.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Olivier (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, as a new member of parliament, I had been green enough to prepare a sophisticated speech, but it seems very difficult today to deliver it in front of my colleagues, for the main arguments I wanted to underline have already been said.

On the other hand, I would like to raise a matter which seemed to be the main concern of those who intervened, saying that the first purpose was to protect society and still legalize murder. As a matter of fact, maintaining capital punishment would do just that. They also wanted to protect police officers but, in my opinion, the bill now before us brings no solution to this problem. It would just