

I know that the Minister of Agriculture is intelligent enough to think, before I say it to him, that an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, between two citizens, applies, of course, but that the state has been entrusted by citizens with the responsibility of the nation's business. It has a responsibility which, according to the Catholic doctrine in which I was brought up, comes from God, and it has the right to demand retribution and sanctions for citizens who do not comply with the general law, and especially those who disregard this most sacred right, the right to life. The saying "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" does not apply in the case of the state, far from it.

And the proof is that the state is not concerned, for instance in crimes of treason when those who have betrayed the nation are put against a wall and shot. Therefore, it is a false argument, a trick easily seen through.

The Minister of Agriculture said earlier that the last vote, the one taken here eighteen months ago, had not been a very clear vote, because it became clear in the following months that some hon. members would have agreed to a compromise if the bill had been drafted differently. I feel that is a gratuitous assumption, totally unfounded, because that vote taken eighteen months ago, and which to me seemed so clear, asked: Are you for or against maintaining the death penalty in the case of capital murder?

The question was very simple. The house could not be convinced at that time because precisely it was sure that a very great majority of Canadians wanted to maintain the death penalty.

Until parliament guarantees to all Canadians that we have a penitentiary system which can protect the citizens of Canada and help to find the means and the people to rehabilitate the murderers, and which can set up institutions adapted to the conditions of the times so that they do not have to wallow in cages for wild animals where they will eventually think of taking their own lives by hanging themselves, as happens too often every year, until we have a proper system of rehabilitation, in short, until we have all these things, Mr. Chairman, I think the majority of the members, had they not been morally molested and influenced would not have voted this afternoon to pass the motion for second reading.

• (9:20 p.m.)

This is why I say that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Bow River is

#### *Amendments Respecting Death Sentence*

at least an improvement on this bill which is badly presented and badly defended, and that we should support it, because it is the result of an implacable logic.

I heard this afternoon an hon. member who said that capital punishment should not be considered as a protection against future crimes. I think that he is entitled to his opinion, but it is completely unfounded. Mine is as good as his, because they are not supported by figures and I think that there is a natural law which states that if I think that my life will be endangered because I commit a crime, I will be less inclined to commit one than if I am told: "My friend, you may commit a crime and you will be paid a pension during your lifetime, you will be well housed, fed and made comfortable; you will be paid a rehabilitation course, so that after eight years, ten months and one day, you may go and earn honourably your living anywhere in the world."

Mr. Chairman, I think that if the government does not agree to add certain amendments as logical as the one moved by the hon. member for Bow River to such legislation which was so badly drafted, presented and defended, it will throw regrettable discredit on this government. Mr. Chairman, I do not usually use such stern language when I speak about the government. As a rule, I would rather support the government than fight it, because I have not been sent here as a member of the opposition who must try to take the place of those in power. I have been sent here to try to co-operate with them, whatever the party to which they belong, but under the circumstances I say and I repeat that if the government wishes to re-establish its good name with this legislation which is badly drafted and defended, it will have to accept a few proposed amendments in order to show its goodwill. It should, as is commonly said, meet us half-way when there is such evident contestation about the bill now under consideration.

[English]

**The Deputy Chairman:** Is the committee ready for the question?

*And the yeas and nays on the amendment having been taken:*

**Mr. Webb:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, at least six members on the government side of the house came in after the vote had