

the shooting can go to the gallows. However, if a man who has had no training, has no gun, and no arms, nothing except a strong sense of civilian duty, goes to the aid of a policeman and is shot down, then the man who kills him knows quite well that the most he can get for his crime is life imprisonment. In my opinion this is the utmost in unfairness. It shows that this bill is not an honest bill, Mr. Speaker. It is a bill that is being imposed upon this house for the second time in 18 months.

• (9:50 p.m.)

As you and I know, Mr. Speaker, this matter was thoroughly discussed 18 months ago at great length. It was discussed by this same house, by the same members, and all of us who wanted to express our views did so, and stood up and voted. The majority of the members voted for the retention of the death penalty, but the cabinet decided that they would fly in the face of the decision taken by this house. They completely disregarded it, Mr. Speaker, and in every case since, sentences of death have been commuted.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Woolliams) said today, as far as this government is concerned there is no death penalty. In order to try to justify what they have done over the past four years we are now having the same kind of proposition put to us, only it is being sweetened up to try to make it more acceptable.

Anyone who believes that this is going to be a truly free vote as far as the members on the other side of the house are concerned is, I think, only deluding himself. This is a government bill. The government cannot afford to lose this vote. Word has gone out through the ranks of the Liberal party that this is a government bill and must be backed.

I submit we must not allow back in society people with minds which are warped and twisted; people with killer minds that made it possible for them to commit crimes which are horrible. Anyone who has sat in on cabinet and heard these terrible crimes recounted, knows how horrible and unbelievably rotten they are. The kind of crimes that are perpetrated against little children, young girls, defenceless old women and men makes your blood run cold.

The suggestion that we simply put these people away for something like nine years—with good behaviour—with nothing being done to change their minds, and then to let them out on the street again, ready to repeat their crimes all over again, is something I

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cannot condone. I say to the government that if I have to make a decision between the life of the killer and the next potential victim, then I am going to vote in favour of the next potential victim, and do what I can to protect him and his life in the future.

**Mr. H. E. Stafford (Elgin):** Mr. Speaker, so far in this debate the retentionists have just reached the blind conclusion that the death penalty is needed to protect society. I too want to protect society just as much as the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton (Mr. Flemming). He said he is in favour of retention because he is in favour of protecting helpless women and children. So am I, Mr. Speaker; where we differ is that I feel helpless women and children can obtain the same protection by imposing on the criminal a sentence of life imprisonment. I think life imprisonment is just as much a deterrent as capital punishment.

The hon. member for Victoria-Carleton went on to say that in this day and age of violence and crime any tampering with penalties is dangerous. We do not live in a perfect society, Mr. Speaker, and we must have laws. Our laws must be refined, reassessed and reviewed from time to time as we become more knowledgeable. I feel that all of the evidence before us today leads us strongly to only one conclusion, and that is that life imprisonment is just as much a deterrent as capital punishment.

If life imprisonment is just as much a deterrent as capital punishment, then because we live in a democracy we have a duty to vote for this bill. Bearing in mind the definition of democracy, I would suggest we have no right to impose any penalty that is more severe than necessary in order to carry out our purpose. In this case our purpose is the protection of the same people the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton mentioned a few minutes ago.

**Mr. Flemming:** Would the hon. member permit a question. How did he vote on April 5 last year, for or against the bill?

**Mr. Stafford:** As the hon. member can see by looking at the debates for April 5, I voted for abolition.

**Mr. Webb:** I would like to ask a question, if I may. Would the hon. member accept a question?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I wonder whether the hon. member should not be allowed to make his speech.